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# CHRISTIANITY TESTED BY EMINENT MEN:

Being Brief Sketches of

# CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

By MERRITT CALDWELL, A. M.

283

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION.

THE lamented author of these sketches had a yearning love for the welfare of the young. At an early period of his life he became a teacher. For twenty years he continued in this honourable and useful vocation. His time, his talents and his attainments, and, finally, his health and life, were laid down, a willing sacrifice for the glory of God and the good of the young.

The present volume is one of the evidences of his solicitude for this class of persons, and especially for their spiritual welfare. Whether as principal of the Maine Wesleyan Seminary, or as professor in Dickinson College, Professor Caldwell was ever active in leading young men to the foot of the cross. He felt the need of something like the present volume,

which might be put into the hands of young men, especially of such as are sceptically inclined. The human mind, by nature, is averse to God, and will not receive the way of salvation by the cross.

How many young men in our schools and colleges, of considerable talents and reading, are not only at heart unbelievers, but sometimes professedly so! They have never examined the evidences of Christianity, but brace and fortify themselves with great names. They say, Jefferson, and Gibbon, and Hume, were at least doubters, if not positive disbelievers in the whole system of the Christian religion. It *cannot* be dishonourable, it *may* not be contrary to truth, to follow in the steps of such men. And thus a hardy bravado takes possession of the young mind, and there begins to be a fearful trifling with spiritual and eternal interests. In this little book the authority of great names, in every department of learning and honour, is made to subserve a better purpose. The author has looked over the ranks of the laity, in our own and other countries. He has

interrogated the greatest philosophers, statesmen, jurists, poets and artists, of modern times, as to their opinions on the Christian religion. And all brought together constitutes a body of evidence for Christianity, enough to neutralize, a hundred times, the mere opinions of such men as Lord Bolingbroke, Gibbon and Hume.

It is not only a body of evidence for Christianity, but for its experimental character,—affording a delightful view of its practical influence on great minds. Washington and Newton, Bacon and Pascal, are seen to have been experimental Christians,—men of prayer —often retiring to hold communion with God the Father of spirits. The celebrated Boyle, speaking of this last-named distinguished man, says: "A hundred volumes of religious discourses are not of so much avail to confound the impious as a simple account of the life of Pascal. His humility and his devotion mortify the libertines more than if they were attacked by a dozen missionaries. They can no longer assert that piety is confined to little minds, when they behold the highest degree

of it in a geometrician of the first rank, the most acute metaphysician, and one of the most penetrating minds that ever existed."

One such testimony of a candid and discriminating mind, such as Pascal's, is worth more for sustaining the reality of experimental religion, than all the reasonings of infidelity and formalism. He testifies of a land that he has seen, and infidelity of one it has not seen. He speaks from his own consciousness, the most certain ground of belief; while infidelity at best can only argue from remote analogies, the most uncertain of all evidence. A triumphant argument, we hold, therefore, is brought out in these sketches, for the reality of experimental religion—an argument which, it is almost needless to say, is confirmed by the experience of all truly converted men, by the word of God, and the fitness of things. A religion that does not affect the heart as well as the intellect, that does not soothe the sorrows of man, and bring peace and quietness to his troubled spirit, is after all worth but little. For what signify outward comforts, and even splendours, if the soul is under the bondage of

fear, and without the inward life of the Divine Spirit?

It has already been hinted that these sketches are confined to eminent Christian laymen. The author himself was a layman, and thus continued during life, though frequently importuned to enter the ministry. It should also be said that they were originally published in the Maine Wesleyan Journal. They were commenced in January, 1839, and continued from time to time for something more than two years, with the original intention of carrying them on much further. Indeed, materials were collected for this purpose. But in the spring of 1841 they were interrupted by the ill health of the author; and after his recovery, his mind was so far diverted to other objects, that he was led to abandon this, at least for the time being.

His own views and feelings, in entering upon and prosecuting this work, will appear from his own introductory remarks, and from a subsequent letter, a few extracts from which we will here present the reader.

He remarks: "These sketches were first

intended mainly for the young, who, whatever else they may have learned, may not have learned that the most eminent men of modern times have been the devoted advocates of Christianity. This, the writer of these sketches did not early perceive—his attention was not early directed to this subject. But here another direction is given to this subject. We are told that Christian biography may serve as a confirmation of the faith even of the sincere and humble *Christian.* To thousands who are destined, in the order of Providence, to move in the lower walks of life, and, perhaps, to see pride and vice triumphant, while virtue and unassuming worth pine in lonely, and perhaps starving, solitude—to thousands such, I say, the question must have presented itself: 'If Christianity is true, why are not those who take the lead in society its advocates?' To such as propose this question, these sketches say: Those who take the lead in most of the lower circles of society, are either those whom the world loves more because *the world loves its own*, and not because of the possession of any learning,

talent, or real worth; or who have devoted their conscience upon the altar of their ambition, and having intellect enough to learn the truth, still love darkness rather than light, *because their deeds are evil.* And these sketches further say to such inquirers: 'Look beyond the narrow circle of your own neighbourhood or town—look out upon those who have taken the lead in carrying on all the most important enterprises of the world, and whose names stand as beacon-lights along the paths of science, shining brighter and brighter with the lapse of years, and when you contemplate such a one, then will you find a *Christian.*'"

Let the young man, or even the old man, who has not had the means of pushing his inquiries among the speculative objections to Christianity, or among the speculative evidences by which it is supported, remember this, that no objection has ever been urged which has not been reviewed, and fully confuted, by the researches of the wonderful men whose names are presented in these sketches.

We would close our introductory remarks by commending this little volume, containing

so bright a galaxy of the stars of our common Christianity, to the blessing of God. May the design of its lamented and pious author be fulfilled, who desired, first of all, in this and in everything else, to be useful in bringing souls to Christ, and in promoting the glory of our common Lord.

STEPHEN M. VAIL.

CONCORD, N. H., *May* 8, 1851.

# SKETCHES

OF

# EMINENT CHRISTIAN MEN.

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## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS—SIR MATTHEW HALE—DR. JOHN GODMAN—DR. JUDSON—LEONARD EULER—PROFESSOR JOHN HUBBARD—DR. NATHAN SMITH—RICHELIEU, MAZARIN, AND SIR THOMAS SMITH—BEAUFORT, BORGIA, AND CARDINAL WOLSEY—DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM—BARON (GEORGE) CUVIER—LORD LITTLETON—DR. GILBERT WEST—ROGER SHERMAN.

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE great truths of Christianity rest not on the opinions of men, nor on the character of those who embrace them; yet our Saviour himself has said, "Ye are the light of the world." Christians then are the representatives of Christianity. From this responsibility we cannot free ourselves, nor would we if we could. It would but take from us one of our highest motives to represent its principles *faithfully*.

It is in vain, that we point one of the ordinary class of sceptics, or men of the world, to the *Bible* to learn what Christianity is. He at once refers you to those who professedly adopt its principles as the guide of their lives, and thus brings Christianity to the test, not of the purity of the Gospel precepts, but to the imperfect standard of practical morality among professed Christians. So it is, so it always has been, so we presume it always will be, while the human heart retains its natural perverseness.

But this is not all. In such reference, the sceptic is always sure to direct the attention to the more unworthy of those who bear the Christian name, and even goes so far as to assert, that none but *weak minds* have ever been entangled in its sophistries, or yielded an assent to its absurdities. If we point him to the distinguished advocates of the Gospel system, who have enlightened the world by their science and by their mental power, we are only told of *priestcraft*, and reminded that these men have all had their worldly interests combined with their *apparent* zeal in the cause of God.

Such a course ought to have no influence, except upon the minds of the young and the unthinking. For, in the first place, the as-

sumption is not a true one, and, in the second place, even if it were, the inference attempted to be drawn is not legitimate. The assumption is not correct, inasmuch as many of the most gifted intellects, and of the most richly endowed minds with which the world has ever been favoured, have yielded their assent to the truths of the Gospel. And the inference of the unbeliever is not legitimate, inasmuch as the principles of Christianity are eternally excellent: not less so, in the most corrupt ages of the Church, than when they have been exemplified in all their native and essential purity; not less so, when those who have taken on themselves the vows of religion prove recreant to their obligations, than when they adorn their professions by a godly walk and conversation.

Still, so it is; inferences are drawn from the character of those who profess the religion of Christ, as to the character of that religion itself. And so let it be; but let not the character of those who assume the Christian name be mis-stated.

In the following sketches professed clergymen will be passed by on the ground, mainly, that their religious character is well known; but other Christians, distinguished for great mental power, for great learning, or extraordi-

nary piety, will be briefly noticed. We ask attention first to Sir Matthew Hale, one of England's greatest statesmen and writers.

## SIR MATTHEW HALE.

Sir Matthew Hale was born at Alderley, Gloucestershire, England, November 1, 1609. Before he had attained his fifth year, both his parents were removed by death. In early life he had the reputation of being an extraordinary proficient in learning, and before he was seventeen, was a member of Oxford College. In 1629, Mr. Hale was admitted a student at law in Lincoln's Inn. "Here," says his biographer, "he brought to bear on his books the whole energy of his powerful mind. So intense was his ardour, that difficulties only stimulated him to exertion; and for a while, he studied at the rate of sixteen hours a day." He soon attracted the notice of some of the most distinguished men of England, among whom was the illustrious Selden, whose friendship he shared during his life. Under the patronage, and sustained by the friendship of these renowned men, he prosecuted his studies with the greatest enthusiasm and diligence. "So great was his mental vigour," we are told, "that he regarded philosophical and

mathematical pursuits as *diversions*, in which, when weary with studying law or theology, he found recreation."

In 1653, Mr. Hale was created a sergeant at law; in 1654, was chosen a member of Parliament; in 1660, received the commission of Lord Chief Baron of England; and in 1671, succeeded Sir John Keyling, as Lord Chief Justice of the King's bench. Thus, as Sir Matthew Hale, we see him holding the very highest judicial trusts of England, the latter of which he retained, till, in person, he surrendered it to the king, and retired to the place of his birth, to pass in quiet the remainder of his days.

Yet Sir Matthew Hale was a uniform, consistent, and devoted Christian. The *integrity* with which he discharged his public duties, is everywhere proverbial. His *temperance* was so strongly marked, that from about the time he entered on the study of the law, he even refused to drink the king's health, though that was deemed a distinguishing mark of loyalty, and the refusal often subjected him to uncivil treatment. He made no use even of wine. His *observance of the Lord's day* was so strict, that his example is often quoted even to the present time. So uniform was he in this, that for thirty-six years he is said never to have

failed once in going to church on the Sabbath. His reverence for the *Bible*, as the word of God, was most profound. "There is no book like the Bible," said he, "for excellent learning, wisdom, and use."

But the piety of Sir M. Hale is not left to inference. Hear the testimony of the pious and excellent Baxter, when speaking of Sir Matthew as he drew near to the close of his life:—"It is not the least of my pleasures," says he, "that I have lived some years in his more than ordinary love and friendship, and that we are now waiting which shall be *first* in heaven, whither, he saith, *he* is going with full content and acquiescence in the will of a gracious God, and doubts not but we shall shortly live together. O what a blessed world would this be, were but the generality of magistrates such as he!"

Another illustration of the piety of Sir M. Hale, from his own pen, is not less interesting: "My intensest love to God," said he, "is my duty; I cannot exceed my proportion. It is my wisdom, for I fix my heart upon that which is more than worthy of my love. It is my happiness, for I am joined to that which is my chiefest good. The best of creatures is too narrow for the compass of my love. There is not fulness enough in it to answer my desire—

it is too short and temporary. It will die, when my soul, and the motions of it, will live, and so again want that on which to fix. But in my love to God, I shall find an overflowing fulness, that will fill up the most capacious and intensest gaspings and outgoings of my love—a fulness that will continue to all eternity—a fulness that will satisfy my soul, and yet increase my love. New and higher discoveries will *eternally* be let in unto me, which my soul shall everlastingly pursue, and in pursuing, enjoy with delight and blessedness."

Such a man and such a Christian was Sir Matthew Hale. He died Dec. 25, 1676.

## DR. JOHN GODMAN.

JOHN GODMAN was born in Annapolis, in the State of Maryland. Before he was two years of age, he lost his mother; and before he was five, he was, as he once said, "fatherless and friendless." The little property that was left him he never received, and thus he was thrown out upon the world to find his way through it.

In early life, he was indented an apprentice to a printer in Baltimore. In 1813 he left this business, and entered as a sailor on board the Flotilla, which was then stationed in the

Chesapeake Bay. At the close of the war, being then fifteen years of age, and at liberty to pursue the natural bent of his own mind, he commenced the study of medicine. In the prosecution of the science of anatomy, he surpassed all his fellows, and sometime before he was graduated, was called to the chair of anatomy in the University of Maryland, where he was then a student, to supply the place of his preceptor, who was taken from his lectures in consequence of a fractured extremity. He was specially marked by his teachers for the extent and accuracy of his knowledge.

After he was graduated, he continued to prosecute his studies with the same zeal which had hitherto characterized him. Natural history and the languages came in for a share of his attention. In a few years he was called to the Professorship of Anatomy in the Medical College of Ohio, where he remained one year; and in 1826, was called to fill the same chair in Rutgers Medical College, in the city of New-York. Here he had not completed his second course of lectures, when declining health compelled him to leave New-York, and to seek a more genial climate in one of the West India Islands.

From this disease Dr. Godman never recovered, but continued to devote his every

hour to the cause of letters, with an enthusiasm rarely if ever equalled, till he terminated his life at the age of thirty-two. Though thus early called from the pursuits of science, he made larger acquisitions than most minds are capable of in a long life. His success, as a lecturer on anatomy, has never been equalled in this country; his "Natural History of American Quadrupeds" is the most ample and elaborate which has ever been published; and he had acquired such a knowledge of the Latin, Greek, French, German, Danish, Spanish, and Italian languages, as to read and translate them with fluency, and to write several of them with elegance.

Such was Dr. Godman, as a scholar and as a man of science. Let us turn to his Christian character.

Till the winter of 1827, Dr. G. was sceptical; and, to use his own language, had become an infidel, rejecting revelation, and casting all the evidences of an existing God beneath his feet. A visit to the death-bed of a Christian student, turned his attention to the Bible, which is the source of all *light*. He immediately gave up the deductions of his perverted reason, and, in the spirit of true philosophy, resorted to the instructions of Him who taught as never man taught.

The success of his application to this source of light and truth, appears in a letter which he addressed to a medical friend, Dr. Judson, then surgeon in the navy of the United States, and in the last stages of consumption :—

"GERMANTOWN, Dec. 25, 1828.

"In relation to dying, my dear friend, you talk like a sick man and just as I used to do when very despondent. Death is a debt we all owe to nature, and must eventually ensue from a mere wearing out of the machine, if not from disease. The time when, makes no difference in the act of dying to the individual; for, after all, it terminates in corporeal insensibility, let the preceding anguish be never so severe. Nature certainly has a strong abhorrence to this cessation of corporeal action, and all animals have a dread of death who are conscious of its approach. A part of our dread of death is purely physical, and is avoidable only by a philosophical conviction of its necessity; but the greater part of our dread, and the terrors with which the avenues to the grave are surrounded, are from another, and a more potent source. 'Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all,' and forces us by our terrors to confess that we dread something beyond physical dissolution, and that we are ter-

rified, not at merely ceasing to breathe, but that we have not lived as we ought to have done, have not effected the good that was within the compass of our abilities, and neglected to exercise the talents we possessed to the greatest advantage. The only remedy for this fear of death is to be sought by approaching the Author of all things in the way prescribed by himself, and not according to our own foolish imaginations. Humiliation of pride, denial of self, subjection of evil tempers and dispositions, and an entire submission to his will for support and direction, are the best preparatives for such an approach. A perusal of the Gospels, in a spirit of real inquiry, after a direction how to act, will certainly teach the way. In these Gospels the Saviour himself has preached his own doctrines, and he who runs may read. He has prescribed the course—he shows how the approval and mercy of God may be won; he shows how awfully corrupt is man's nature, and how deadly his pride and stubbornness of heart, which cause him to try every subterfuge to avoid the humiliating confession of his own weakness, ignorance, and folly. But the same blessed hand has stripped death of all the terrors which brooded around the grave, and converted the gloomy receptacle

of our mortal remains into the portal of life and light. O let me die the death of the righteous; let my last end and future state be like his!

"This is all I know on the subject. I am no theologian, and have as great an aversion to priestcraft as one can entertain. I was once an infidel, as I told you in the West Indies. I became a Christian from conviction, produced by the candid inquiry recommended to you. I know of no other way in which death can be stripped of its terrors; certainly none better can be wished. Philosophy is a fool, and pride a madman. Many persons die with what is called *manly firmness;* that is, having acted a part all their lives according to their prideful creed, they must die *game.* They put on as smooth a face as they can, to impose on the spectators, and die *firmly.* But this is all deception; the true state of their minds at the very time, nine times out of ten, is worse than the most horrible imaginings even of hell itself. Some who have led lives adapted to sear their conscience, and petrify all the moral sensibilities, die with a kind of indifference similar to that with which a hardened convict submits to a new infliction of disgraceful punishment. But the man who dies as a man ought to die, is the humble-minded,

believing Christian—one who has tasted and enjoyed all the blessings of creation; who has had an enlightened view of the wisdom and glory of his Creator; who has felt the vanity of merely worldly pursuits and motives, and been permitted to know the mercies of a blessed Redeemer as he approaches the narrow house appointed for all the living.

"Physical death may cause his senses to shrink and fail at the trial; but his mind, sustained by the Rock of Ages, is serene and unwavering. He relies not on his own righteousness, for that would be vain; but the arms of mercy are beneath him—the ministering spirits of the Omnipotent are around him. He does not die manfully, but he rests in Jesus; he blesses his friends, he casts his hope on One all powerful to sustain, and mighty to save; then sleeps in peace. He is dead—but liveth; for He who is the resurrection and the life has declared, 'Whoso believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.'"

This letter is sufficient to establish the piety of Dr. Godman. His pious trust in God sustained him during a protracted illness, and was his solace in death. A friend who was his constant companion during his sickness,

and witnessed his last moments, writes thus: —"You ask me to give you an account of his last moments; they were such as have robbed me of all terror of death, and will afford me lasting comfort through life. The same self-composure and entire resignation which were so remarkable through his whole sickness, supported him to the end. O, it was not death —it was a release from mortal misery to everlasting happiness! Such calmness when he prayed for us all,—such a heavenly composure, even till the breath left him, you would have thought he was going only a short journey. During the day his sufferings had been almost beyond enduring. Frequently did he pray that the Lord would give him patience to endure all till the end, knowing that it could not be many hours; and truly his prayers were heard. 'Lord Jesus, receive my soul,' were the last words he uttered; and his countenance appeared as if he had a foretaste of heaven even before his spirit left this world."

## DR. JUDSON.

RATHER as an appendix to the biographical sketch of Dr. Godman, I here present an account of the conversion and death of Dr. Judson, to whom, when in the last stage of consumption, the letter of Dr. Godman, as given before, was addressed.

The eulogist of Dr. Godman says, in regard to the letter thus addressed to Dr. Judson:—

"This letter, which so truly contrasts the death-bed scene of the infidel with that of the Christian, so beautifully portrays the history of the change which had been effected in Dr. Godman's own sentiments and affections, and so clearly points the benighted wanderer to the true source of life and light, was not lost upon his friend to whom it was addressed. It described his condition, and it reached his heart.

"Dr. Judson, though religiously instructed when young, having a pious clergyman for his father, and another for his elder brother, (Dr. Judson, the late distinguished missionary in India,) yet had long since freed himself from what he called the prejudices of education, the shackles of priestcraft, and was ranging the fields of infidelity. He had acquired wealth and reputation; was an estimable man

in all the domestic relations of life, and a highly respected member of our profession; but the self-denying doctrines of the Saviour were too humbling to his proud spirit, and he could not submit to their influence. At the time he received Dr. Godman's letter, however, he was gloomy and despondent; looking forward with fearful forebodings to the period of his dissolution, which seemed not far distant. He had no confidence but that of the sceptic,—no hope but that of ceasing to be. Aware of the fatal nature of the disease under which he had lingered for years, he had long been arming himself to meet the king of terrors with composure, that he might die like a philosopher—'*with manly firmness;*' but, as he drew nearer to the grave, the clouds and darkness thickened around him, and he began to fear that there might be something beyond this narrow prison. He had hitherto refused all religious intercourse, but now his infidelity began to give way, and he inquired with solicitude, 'Is there such a thing as the new birth? and if so, in what does it consist?' He was directed to the Gospels for the answer. He at length consented to make the investigation recommended by Dr. Godman. He took up the New Testament, and read it in the spirit of candid inquiry. A conviction of the truth

of its doctrines fastened upon him. He now solicited the advice and prayers of a pious clergyman. Yet he could not consent to relinquish the sentiments which he had so long cherished without the clearest proof; and he disputed every inch of ground with great acuteness and ability; but the truth was exhibited by this venerable divine (the Rev. William Ryland) with such force and simplicity, that it overcame every argument he could produce, and he saw clearly the folly of his sceptical opinions. The clouds were dissipated, light broke in upon his mind, and he was enabled to take hold of the promises. The remaining days of his life were devoted to fervent prayer, and the constant study of the Scriptures, which filled his soul with divine composure, and enabled him to rely with undoubting confidence on the infinite merits of his Redeemer, and with his last breath to cry, 'Peace, peace.' If he did not die with '*manly firmness*,' he '*rested in Jesus.*' "

It is worthy of remark by the young, that we here have the names of Godman and Judson, of Sewall and Ryland, honourably associated with Christianity. They were each and all most noble men, and each has entered into his rest above, having proved the power of the religion of Christ both in life and in death.

## LEONARD EULER.

LEONARD EULER was born at Basil, in 1707, where he was educated. His early academical tasks were performed with wonderful ease, insomuch that a large portion of his time was left for the pursuit of mathematics and philosophy; and his success in these branches soon obtained for him the distinguished attention and esteem of John Bernouilli, one of the chief mathematicians of Europe. At the age of sixteen years, he was admitted to the degree of M. A., on which occasion he obtained great applause by delivering a Latin discourse, wherein he drew a comparison between the philosophy of Newton and the Cartesian system. In 1727, at the age of twenty, he was appointed over the mathematical class, in the Academy of Science at Petersburg. His different publications on the nature and propagation of sound, on curves, on the calculus integralis, the movement of the celestial bodies, and other useful subjects, had already raised his reputation, and ranked him among the greatest of philosophers. The integral calculus he carried to new degrees of perfection; and by the astonishing powers of his mind,

new light was thrown on all the branches of mathematical science.

In 1730, Euler was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Petersburg; and in 1733, was called to the chair of mathematics. In 1735, he finished the solution of an important problem, in three days, which his fellow-academicians asked four months to complete. Thus he continued to prosecute the sciences with indefatigable zeal, at Petersburg, and, by express invitation of the king of Prussia, at Berlin, successively receiving large rewards for his scientific discoveries, from the British parliament, and from the French king, till he terminated his life at the age of 76, in 1783.

At the period of his death, Euler was a foreign member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, member of the Imperial Academy of Petersburg, ancient director of the Royal Academy at Berlin, and fellow of the Royal Society of London.

Few men of letters ever wrote so much as Euler. His printed works amount to thirty-eight volumes; and the bare list of his works (including his manuscripts) makes fourteen pages.

"His memory shall endure," says one of his biographers, "till science herself is no

more." No generation has ever embraced so many objects at one time, or has equalled him, either in the variety or the magnitude of his discoveries. He had read all the Latin classics, could repeat the whole Æneid of Virgil by heart; was perfect master of ancient mathematical literature; had the history of all ages and nations, even to the minutest facts, ever present to his mind; was acquainted with physic, botany, and chemistry; and was possessed of every qualification that could render a man estimable.

"Yet this man, accomplished as he was, was filled with respect for religion. His piety was sincere, and his devotion full of fervour. He went through all his Christian duties with the greatest attention. He loved all mankind; and, if ever he felt a motion of indignation, it was against the enemies of religion—particularly against the declared apostles of infidelity. Against the objections of these, he defended revelation in a work published at Berlin, in 1747."

As will be inferred from the foregoing quotation, this great philosopher was not merely a believer, but a devout Christian. Says another biographer: "His piety was ardent, but sincere; he loved mankind, and defended the great truths of religion with earnestness and

fidelity." Where such minds have yielded assent, men of ordinary intellects should doubt with caution.

This great Christian philosopher died of a fit of apoplexy. The stroke was sudden, and immediately fatal.

## PROFESSOR HUBBARD.

It is believed that the following extract from the address of President Allen, occasioned by the death of Dr. Nathan Smith, will not be deemed inappropriate to the general object of these sketches. It describes the death-bed scene of Professor Hubbard, of Dartmouth College. Professor H. is represented as "a gentleman of science,—a gentleman also of feeling, of taste, and various accomplishments, —universally respected and greatly beloved;" and is supposed to be John Hubbard, who was graduated at Dartmouth, in 1785. He died in 1810.

"On the approach of death," says Dr. Allen, "his triumph was almost unequalled. The king of terrors was completely baffled and conquered. The dying disciple of the Redeemer descanted most freely and copiously, and with a kind of celestial and transporting eloquence, on the grace and mercy of the Sa-

viour, and on the scenes of the future and eternal state,—on the visions of that upper world, which he was about to enter; and so commingled with the expression of his well anchored hopes and lofty anticipations the expression of his tender regard for those who stood around his bed, and animating exhortations to the practice of holiness and the service of Christ,—closing, as he was skilled in all music, with such rapt hymnings to the praise of redeeming love—that every beholder was constrained to say, Surely the gospel is true, and there is power in religion! I have often heard this scene mentioned by Christians as the most wonderful scene they ever witnessed.

"Of this scene Dr. Smith was a witness, for the dying man was his patient, as well as his companion and friend; and it struck him with astonishment. He did not ascribe it to nervous influence, to an inflamed fancy, to wild delusion; for the sufferer, or rather the beatified mortal, was a man of reason and argument, as well as of feeling. His words carried conviction to the mind as well as emotion to the heart. From this dark cloud of death the heat-lightning burst forth with a splendour which for the moment left no trace of the darkness; and the voice of

God was a voice of power, before which every soul bowed in reverence and awe."

Who would not say, after all the vaunting of infidelity, "Let me live the life of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?"

## NATHAN SMITH.

NATHAN SMITH was born in Rehoboth, Mass., Sept. 30, 1762; but while young removed with his parents to Chester, Vt. His early literary attainments were small. About the year 1786 he was providentially a witness of a surgical operation, which awakened within his breast an irresistible desire of becoming a student of medicine. Preparatory study was called for; but this he soon performed, and entered on his medical studies. In 1790, he received the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, at Hartford College, the only medical school then in New-England, and the third only in the United States.

Enterprise was one of the leading traits in the character of Dr. S. Though raised on his father's farm, at the foot of the Green Mountains, and though yet master of but limited means, in a few years he projected a Medical School in connexion with Dartmouth College. His plan being approved by President Whee-

lock, he determined to proceed to Europe, where he might perfect his qualifications, and obtain the necessary apparatus for commencing so important an enterprise. In 1797, he attended lectures in Edinburgh and in Glasgow, passed some months in London, and returned to open his lectures in 1798, which were delivered in one of the rooms in Dartmouth College. As an evidence of the respect in which he was held abroad, soon after he left London, he was elected a corresponding member of the London Medical Society.

Dr. S. was appointed sole Professor in the Medical School of Dartmouth College; and for twelve years lectured himself on all the branches usually taught in medical schools, assisted only in two courses in regard to chemistry. Though thus single handed and alone, the school flourished under his care, and rose to great distinction and usefulness. In 1823 he was invited to the chair of the Theory and Practice of Physic and Surgery, in the School about to be opened at College. Here he laboured, sustaining the reputation previously acquired; and in 1821, he was called to take charge of the Medical School connected with Bowdoin College, in the State of Maine.

Here also he commenced, as he had done at Dartmouth, delivering lectures on the various

subjects, with the exception of chemistry;—aided, however, in anatomy by the skilful hand of him who became his successor, the lamented Professor Wells. He continued his lectures here for four years, and withdrew to give his whole attention to the medical establishment at New-Haven.

"Dr. Smith," says President Allen, "established the fourth medical school in the United States. He lived afterwards thirty-one years, in which period he saw nearly twenty other similar institutions, organized and flourishing in different parts of the country, attended perhaps by two thousand students. And to what more than to him is to be ascribed this vast change in the medical advantages of America? Who can estimate the value of the results, which may be traced to the blessing of God on the enterprise of one man; and that man unlettered and unknown, till he was nearly thirty years of age?"

About the middle of July, 1828, he was seized with a severe illness, from which he never entirely recovered. He closed his life on the 26th of January, 1829, aged sixty-seven.

Professor Smith combined in his character great intellectual power, great professional skill and fidelity, and most of those qualities

of the heart which secure the affections of society. But like too many others, though "exemplary in morals, instinctively kind and benevolent in disposition, honourable in sentiment, skilful, learned, and useful," he came down to the bed of sickness and death, without giving any practical attention to the subject of religion. Indeed it would be interesting to inquire, how far a constant devotion to the charities of life may satisfy the conscience though in the neglect of piety to God.

But, "the death-bed's a detecter of the heart." Here conscience, however smothered and silenced it may have been by the busy and anxious cares of life, speaks out and makes itself heard. Men, less philosophical, less disingenuous, less honest, than was Professor Smith, may still suppress the deep-heaving emotions of such an hour, and resolve in the pride of their hearts to die as they have lived. Not so with him. "In his last sickness he requested the counsel and the prayers of several ministers of the gospel, who, at his bed-side, assisted him in his devotions and supplications for mercy. And finally, when one of his friends asked him, whether in communicating the sad intelligence of his death to one of his sons, he might say, that 'he died in the faith and hope of the gospel?' he pro-

fessed that such was the fact, and wished his friend thus to write."

The life and death of Professor Smith will furnish the reader with many points of interesting reflection.

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THERE have been thousands, many of them among those who have been the benefactors of man, who, like the subject of the last sketch, have lived without piety, and who, when surrounded with the dreary ruins of earthly happiness and hopes, and the images of past monitory events, convictions, neglects, broken resolutions, and withered aspirations after spiritual good, have, with him, lamented their past devotion to mere worldly pursuits, but who perhaps less fortunate have not been sustained in death "by the faith and hopes of the gospel." What shall we do with such? Infidelity does not claim them—will have nothing to do with them; and their names seem scarcely to come in for a place in *Christian Biography.*

Neither infidel nor Christian, what shall we do with them? We will make a short digression for the purpose of alluding to a few such. They may furnish an admonition to some Christian youth, not to put off till sickness or old age the day of repentance.

## ARMAND DU PLESIS DE RICHELIEU

Was of noble parentage. Besides the dignity of cardinal, conferred on him by Gregory XV., he was created duke and peer of France, and enjoyed all the partiality of the king and the adulation of the nation could bestow on him. He was a great man and a celebrated statesman, but had few of the virtues of a good man. Hear his confessions at the end of his earthly career:—

"I have been urged into many irregularities by what is called the reason of state; and as I could not tell how to satisfy my conscience for these deviations from rectitude, I endeavoured to persuade myself that there was no God, nor a future state, that I might quiet the upbraidings of my mind; but my endeavours were vain. So strong was the idea of God in my soul; so clear the impression of him upon the frame of the world; so unanimous the consent of mankind; and so powerful the convictions of my own conscience, that I could not avoid feeling the necessity of admitting a Supreme Being and a future state; and I wished to live as one that must die, and to die as one that must live forever."

But his sun went down amidst clouds and

darkness; and who shall attempt to penetrate the gloom of the night that succeeded?

### JULIUS MAZARIN

Was likewise a cardinal, and succeeded Richelieu as prime minister of France. He was one of the greatest statesmen of Europe, a man of great ambition, and pursued with ardour the chase of worldly honours. But a short time before his death he perceived the vanity of his pursuit, and lamented the misapplication of his time and talents. He was greatly affected with the prospect of his dissolution, and the uncertainty of his future condition. This, we are told, made him cry out, "O, my poor soul! what will become of thee? Whither wilt thou go?"

### SIR THOMAS SMITH

Was of the age of Queen Elizabeth, and executed the high office of secretary of state to the princess. He had received a liberal and polished education, and was king's Professor of Civil Law in the University at Cambridge. "This distinguished person," says a biographer, "a short time before his decease, was much affected with the prospect of his dissolu-

tion and of a future state. He sent to his friends, the bishops of Winchester and Worcester, and entreated them to state to him from the Holy Scriptures, the plainest and surest way of making his peace with God; adding, 'It is lamentable, that men consider not for what end they are born into the world, till they are ready to go out of it.'" We leave his case where the memoir which we have consulted leaves it.

## HENRY BEAUFORT

Was of royal extraction, being the son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and brother of Henry IV., of England. He was successively chancellor of England, ambassador to France, a cardinal in 1426, and legate in Germany. In his character he was proud, haughty, and ambitious; and was commonly called the rich Cardinal of Winchester. In his last moments he thus vented his afflicted soul to his friends who surrounded him: "And must I then die? Will not all my riches save me? I could purchase the kingdom, if that would prolong my life. Alas! there is no bribing death. When my nephew, the Duke of Bedford, died, I thought my happiness and my authority greatly increased; but the Duke of Glouces-

ter's death raised me in fancy to a level with kings, and I thought of nothing but accumulating still greater wealth, to enable me at length to purchase the triple crown. Alas! how are my hopes disappointed! Wherefore, O my friends, let me earnestly beseech you to pray for me, and recommend my departing soul to God."

### CÆSAR BORGIA

Was a natural son of Pope Alexander VI., and was raised to the dignity of duke, by Louis XII., of France. At the close of a life of cruelty as well as of ambition, he made the following humiliating confession:—

"I have provided, in the course of my life, for everything except death; and now, alas! I am to die, although entirely unprepared."

### THOMAS WOLSEY

Was a celebrated favourite at the court of Henry VIII., of England. He rose to the elevated stations of lord high chancellor and prime minister, and was for several years the arbiter of Europe. A short time before he left the world, the review of his life, and a consciousness of the misapplication of his time and talents, drew from him this sorrowful

declaration: "Had I but served my God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs. But this is the just reward that I must receive for my indulgent pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only to my prince."

It is melancholy to reflect, how few of the politicians of our own country are pious men. How many of them will have to bequeath to the world only some such sad memorial as have these illustrious men.

## DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

This may meet the eye of some young man just entering upon a course of pleasurable sin, and who will be induced to flee from that which he sees can end only in sorrow. The estate of Buckingham, says the Earl of Clarendon, was at one time the greatest in England; though he died in abject poverty. A few days before his death, while reviewing a life spent in pleasure and folly, and consequently in sin, he wrote the following letter to a particular friend—Dr. Barrow:—

"Dear Doctor,—I always looked upon you to be a person of true virtue, and know you to have a sound understanding; for however

I have acted in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you, I have always had the highest veneration for both. The world and I shake hands—for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. O, what a prodigal have I been of that most valuable of all possessions—time! I have squandered it away with a profusion unparalleled; and now, when the enjoyment of a few days would be worth the world, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. How despicable, my dear friend, is that man who never prays to his God but in the time of distress! In what manner can he supplicate that omnipotent Being in his afflictions, whom in the time of his prosperity he never remembered with reverence? Do not brand me with infidelity, when I tell you that I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions at the throne of grace, or to implore that divine mercy in the next world which I have scandalously abused in this. Shall ingratitude to man be looked upon as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God? Shall an insult offered to the king be looked upon in the most offensive light, and yet no notice be taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect?

"The companions of my former libertinism would scarcely believe their eyes were you to show them this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch who was shocked at the appearance of futurity; but whoever laughs at me for being right, or pities me for being sensible of my errors, is more entitled to my compassion than resentment. A future state may well enough strike terror into any man who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God. The apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of his understanding. To what a situation am I now reduced! From my rank I might have expected affluence to wait upon my life; from religion and understanding, peace to smile upon my end: instead of which I am afflicted with poverty, haunted with remorse, and, I fear, forsaken by my God!

"There is nothing so dangerous as extraordinary abilities. I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications, especially as I sincerely regret that I ever had them. My rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous; and, fasci-

nated by the general applause which they procured, I never considered the proper means by which they should be displayed. Hence, to procure a smile from a blockhead whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of Heaven, to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but contempt. Your men of wit generally look upon themselves as discharged from the duties of religion, and confine the doctrines of the gospel to people of meaner understandings. It is a sort of derogation, in their opinion, to comply with the rules of Christianity; and they reckon that man possessed of a narrow genius who studies to be good. What a pity that the Holy Writings are not made the criterion of true judgment! or that any person should pass for a gentleman in this world, but he that appears solicitous about his happiness in the next!

"Favour me with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially on a subject I could talk of forever. I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you: my distemper is powerful. Come and pray for the departing spirit of the poor, unhappy BUCKINGHAM."

## GEORGE CUVIER.

GEORGE CUVIER was born on the 23d of August, 1769, at Montbeliard, then a part of the kingdom of Wurtemburg, but now belonging to France. The mind of Cuvier early developed its peculiar tendencies and its wonderful powers. So various were his attainments, and so comprehensive his researches, that I shall not attempt to enter into them specifically. As a legislator, as an orator, as an anatomist, and especially as a natural historian and as an author, was he greatly distinguished. In his memoirs, written by Mrs. Lee, the bare list of his published works, fills eight 12mo. pages. In 1819, he was created baronet, and in 1832, the year of his death, was raised to the peerage of France.

Cuvier was claimed as their countryman, both by the French and the Germans; and at the time of his death was perhaps the man whom the scientific world delighted most to honour. The principal reason for introducing this sketch of Cuvier, is to show the fallacy of the claim which infidelity has brought in, to have his name enrolled among her votaries. Baron Cuvier was a Christian. This is fully sustained by the following quotations

from the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, for October, 1838:—

"As the minister of public instruction, he endeavoured above all, by his own private injunctions as well as his public regulations, to make the love of God, and the divine precepts of the gospel, the basis of all instruction."

"To establish the fact, that M. Cuvier was a really religious man, we conceive would not be difficult; but as to what particular section of Protestantism he belonged to, there are no grounds for assertion or conclusion, for though fervent in private prayer, he was never heard to make a public profession of faith. There were, however, qualities in M. Cuvier of so superior a nature, that they at once stamp him as highly religious. He promoted the cause of true religion by every means in his power, both public and private; he was a warm supporter of the Bible Society, and caused the Old and New Testament to be widely disseminated in every part of Protestant France. In his letters to the heads of colleges, and masters of schools, he strongly recommended them to teach for the love of God, himself pointing out their duties according to that great rule. He constantly adhered to the Protestant faith, when it was well

known that a change to the Roman Catholic form of worship would have been the surest step to the attainment of the highest honours of the State; he caused a number of chapels to be established in order to give facility for attending divine worship; he in all his works refers the wonders of creation to the one true source. He never would receive any salary for administering to the interests of the Protestant religion—but faithfully discharged all the duties of this office, with a zeal which showed that he had a much higher motive than that of gain or reputation.

——"When the hour of death came, he met it with the firmest composure; he traced the progress of his disorder, foretold its phases with calmness, bore his sufferings without a complaint, secured the welfare of others, and gave his final directions on every subject, with the cool courage of a great and religious mind, and an unstained conscience."

Should these extracts leave a doubt on the mind of any one, whether Cuvier was a Christian or an infidel, permit me to inquire, Where in the history of the world has ever been found another infidel such as he is here represented to have been?

## GEORGE LYTTLETON.

George Lyttleton was born in Worcestershire, England, in 1709; and was educated at Eaton and Christ's Church, Oxford, where he distinguished himself as a polite scholar and a good poet. In 1728, on leaving the university, he travelled extensively on the continent; and on his return home obtained a seat in parliament. He successively filled the offices of secretary to the Prince of Wales, lord of the exchequer, privy counsellor, and chancellor of the exchequer; and in 1757 was raised to the peerage. The remainder of his life his lordship passed in honourable retirement from the political turbulence of his times. He was a distinguished statesman, and an intimate friend of the elder Pitt.

Lord Lyttleton was an able writer. Among other literary productions of his, is an elaborate history of Henry II.

The testimonials in favour of his religious character are unanimous and unequivocal. David Simpson, author of the *Plea for Religion*, speaks of him thus:—"The late Lord Lyttleton, and his friend Gilbert West, Esq., had both imbibed the principles of unbelief, and had agreed together to write something

in favour of infidelity. To do this more effectually, they judged it necessary first to acquaint themselves pretty well with the contents of the Bible. By the perusal of that book, however, they were both convicted of their error; both were converts to the religion of Christ Jesus; both took up their pens and wrote in favour of it—the former, his *Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul;* the latter, his *Observations on the Resurrection of Christ*—and both died in peace."

A biographer says: "Lyttleton in the former part of his life had been a sceptic, but his mature age viewed with concern the levities and dangerous tenets of dissolute companions, and after a studious application, he produced, in 1747, '*Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul,*' a valuable book, which infidelity will never be able to answer. His lordship died August 22d, 1773, aged 64. On his death-bed he displayed all the calmness and resignation of a great mind. He again reminded his physician, Dr. Johnson, that he died a sincere Christian, and with composure giving his blessings to those around him, he told Lord Valentia, who with his lady was at his bed-side, with a voice of solemn affection, 'Be good, be virtuous, my lord,—you must come to this.' "

Dr. Johnson himself says: "Lord Lyttleton, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt conversation, entertained doubts of the truth of Christianity; but he thought afterwards, it was no longer fit to doubt, or believe by chance, and therefore applied himself seriously to the great question. His studies being honest, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true; and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach, by *Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul*,—a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer."

We also have his own account of his conversion. Two days before his death, he addressed his physician thus:—"When I first set out in the world, I had friends who endeavoured to shake my belief in the Christian religion. I saw difficulties which staggered me, but I kept my mind open to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Christianity, studied with attention, made me a most firm and persuaded believer of the Christian religion. I have made it the rule of my life, and —it is the ground of my future hopes."

Should this sketch meet the eye of any sceptical reader, let me say,—Go and do as did this great man; and may your last end be like his.

## GILBERT WEST.

GILBERT WEST was referred to in my last sketch as an intimate friend of Lord Lyttleton. He too was educated at Eaton and Christ Church, Oxford. He held some civil offices under the government, but appears never to have courted public life. After his marriage he settled at Wickham, Kent, where we are told "his retirement was frequently visited by Lyttleton and Pitt, who, weary with faction and political debates, courted his society and the tranquillity of his abode." He was in several ways honourably noticed by Pitt. His association with these men sufficiently establishes his general character.

To the classical scholar, he is favourably known by his translation of Pindar's Odes into English—a valuable, elegant, and spirited composition.

His biography says, that in his retirement at Wickham, "he devoted himself to literary and religious pursuits." His *Observations on the Resurrection of Christ*, written after his conversion from infidelity, was deemed a work of great merit, and obtained for him, from the University of Oxford, the honourable degree of LL.D.

Dr. West, writing to Dr. Doddridge on the publication of his Memoirs of Colonel Gardiner, ascribes his own conversion from a state of infidelity, into which he had been seduced, to the care his mother had taken in his education. "I cannot help taking notice," says he, "of your remarks upon the advantage of an early education in the principles of religion, because I have myself most happily experienced it, since I owe to the early care of a most excellent woman, my mother, that bent and bias to religion, which, with the co-operating grace of God, hath at length brought me back to those paths of peace from whence I might have otherwise been in danger of deviating forever."

How valuable this testimony of such a man! and how fortunate, could his example be the means of bringing back to "the paths of peace," some other young man, who may have hitherto disregarded the pious instructions of a sainted mother!

## ROGER SHERMAN.

Roger Sherman was born in Newton, Mass., April 19, 1721; and though he received no other education than the ordinary schools at that time afforded, yet by his ardent thirst for

knowledge, he acquired a very considerable acquaintance with the various branches of general science, became thoroughly versed in law and politics, and attained to some of the highest honours of our country.

He was early apprenticed to a shoemaker, and followed this trade till he was twenty-two years of age, when he commenced business as a country merchant in New Milford, Conn. By a circumstance which may be deemed providential, he was led to the study of the law, and in 1754 was admitted to the bar. In 1759 he was appointed a judge of the county court, and in 1766 advanced to a seat on the bench of the superior court, and was also chosen a member of the council. He was elected a member of congress in 1774, and continued to hold a seat in that body, except when excluded by the law requiring a rotation. In 1776, he was appointed in conjunction with John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Robert R. Livingston, to draw up the Declaration of Independence, and was one of the signers of that instrument. He was also a conspicuous member in the convention which formed the Constitution of the United States. In 1791 he was chosen a senator in congress, and retained the station till the time of his death.

Of Mr. Sherman, John Adams says, he was "one of the soundest and strongest pillars of the Revolution." Mr. Jefferson, pointing to Mr. Sherman, once said, "That is Mr. Sherman, of Connecticut, a man who never said a foolish thing in his life." Such was Roger Sherman; and such he was, in consequence of his early and steady adherence to the principles of Christianity. Before he was twenty-one years of age he made a public profession of religion.

"The most interesting lesson which the life of Mr. Sherman teaches," says one of his biographers, "is the paramount importance of religious principle. His undeviating political integrity was not the result of mere patriotism or philanthropy. He revolved in a higher orbit. The volume which he consulted more than any other was the Bible. It was his custom to purchase a copy of the Scriptures at the commencement of every session of congress, to peruse it daily, and to present it to one of his children on his return. To his familiar acquaintance with this blessed book, much of that extraordinary sagacity which he uniformly exhibited, is to be attributed. The second President Edwards used to call him his 'great and good friend, Senator Sherman;' and acknowledged, that, in the general

course of a long and intimate acquaintance, he was materially assisted by his observations on the principal subjects of doctrinal and practical divinity."

"He was not ashamed," says D. Edwards, "to befriend religion, to appear openly on the Lord's side, or to avow and defend the peculiar doctrines of grace. He was exemplary in attending all the institutions of the gospel, in the practice of virtue in general, and in showing himself friendly to all good men. With all his elevation and with all his honours, he was not at all lifted up, but appeared perfectly unmoved."

On the 23d of July, 1793, this great and excellent man died, aged seventy-two—died in the full possession of all his powers both of mind and body—died as the Christian would wish to die.

"What an example," says the Rev. B. B. Edwards, "is here presented for the youthful lawyer and statesman! Would he rise to the most distinguished usefulness, would he bequeath a character and an influence to posterity 'above all Greek or Roman fame,' let him, like Roger Sherman, lay the foundations in the fear of God, and in obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ."

## CHAPTER II.

SAMUEL ADAMS—ROBERT TREAT PAINE—MATTHEW THORNTON—SAMUEL HUNTINGDON—WILLIAM WILLIAMS—PHILIP LIVINGSTON—RICHARD STOCKTON—JOHN WITHERSPOON—JOHN HART—BENJAMIN RUSH—JOHN MORTON—JAMES SMITH—SAMUEL CHASE—THOMAS STONE—FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN—HUMPHREY DAVY—WILLIAM JONES—JOHN SELDEN—JAMES GARDINER—GEORGE WASHINGTON—TIMOTHY PICKERING—ISAAC SHELBY—BENJAMIN LINCOLN—JOHN BROOKS—ELIEZER BROOKS—MATTHEW CLARKSON.

### Signers of the Declaration of Independence.

### SAMUEL ADAMS, LL. D.,

With his friend John Hancock, by the last act of British rule in Massachusetts, was proscribed, while pardon was announced to all others who had shared in the resistance to the measures of the British ministry. This gives him an enviable distinction among the patriots of that day. On the adoption of a constitution by Massachusetts, he was elected president of the senate; and subsequently, for many successive years, filled the offices of lieutenant-governor, and of chief magistrate in the State.

A biographer says, "Mr. Adams was a Christian, as well as a man of science. He early approached the table of the Lord Jesus, and the purity of his life witnessed the sincerity of his profession. On the Christian

Sabbath he constantly went to the temple; and the morning and evening devotions in his family proved, that his religion attended him in his seasons of retirement from the world. The last production of his pen was in favour of Christian truth. He died in the faith of the gospel."

### ROBERT TREAT PAINE, LL.D.,

Was also one of the Massachusetts delegation, and after the adoption of the State constitution, held successively, for many years, the offices of attorney-general of the State, and of judge of the supreme court.

A biographer says, "Judge Paine was a firm believer in the divine origin of the Christian religion. He gave full credence to the Scriptures, as a revelation from God, designed to instruct mankind in a knowledge of their duty, and to guide them in the way to eternal happiness."

### MATTHEW THORNTON,

Of the New-Hampshire delegation, subsequently held the offices of chief justice of the county of Hillsborough, and of judge of the supreme court of the State.

Rev. Dr. Burnap says, in his funeral sermon, "He was exemplary for his regard for the public institutions of religion, and for his constancy in attending the public worship, where he trod the courts of the house of God with steps tottering with age and infirmity."

## SAMUEL HUNTINGDON,

Of the Connecticut delegation, subsequently held the offices of lieutenant governor, chief judge, and governor of the State.

A biographer says, "The death of this excellent and distinguished man occurred on the 5th of January, 1796, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. His departure from the world, as might be expected from the even tenor of his life, and from the decided Christian character and conversation which he had manifested, was tranquil. He had for many years been a professor of religion, and a devoted attendant upon the ordinances of the gospel. His seat in the house of God was seldom vacant; and when occasion required, he was ready to lead in an address to the throne of grace; and was able to impart instruction to the people, drawn from the pure oracles of God."

## WILLIAM WILLIAMS

Was one of the Connecticut delegation. He filled several honourable offices in his State, and was also for several years a member of congress. On declining a re-election to congress, in an address to the people he admonished them to appoint for his successor, "*one who feared God*, is a friend of the constitution and to the administration of the venerable Washington."

A biographer says, "Mr. Williams made a profession of religion at an early age, and through the course of his life he was distinguished for an humble and consistent conduct and conversation. His latter days were chiefly devoted to reading, meditation, and prayer. At length the hour arrived when God would take him to himself. He gave up the ghost in a good old age, and was gathered to his fathers."

## PHILIP LIVINGSTON

Was a member of the New-York delegation, and was subsequently distinguished, both in his own State and in congress, a session of which he was attending at the time of his death.

A biographer thus speaks of him: "He was a firm believer in the great truths of the Christian system, and a sincere and humble follower of the Divine Redeemer."

## RICHARD STOCKTON

Was a member of the New-Jersey delegation; and held the office of judge, both under the provisional government and after the adoption of the constitution in 1776. He was an accomplished scholar as well as statesman.

The Rev. Dr. Samuel S. Smith, in a discourse delivered on the occasion of his interment, says, "As a Christian, you know that, many years a member of this Church, he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Nor could the ridicule of licentious wits, nor the example of vice in power, tempt him to disguise the profession of it, or to decline from the practice of its virtues."

## JOHN WITHERSPOON, D.D., LL.D.,

A man of distinguished piety, learning, and talents, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

### JOHN HART,

Also one of the New-Jersey delegation, and who retained his seat in congress till his death in 1779, "enjoyed the reputation of being a sincere and humble Christian." He was a member of the Baptist Church in Hopewell, Hunterdon county, N. J.

### BENJAMIN RUSH, M.D., LL.D.,

Was a member of the Pennsylvania delegation, and was, in the best sense of the term, a great man. His father having died when he was but six years of age, the care of his education devolved upon his mother. Under the care of judicious teachers, he was early trained for both worlds. His biographer says, "Such was the force of pious example and religious education in the first fifteen years of his life, that though he spent the ensuing nine in Philadelphia, Edinburgh, London, and Paris, exposed to the manifold temptations which are inseparable from great cities, yet he returned, at the age of twenty-four, to his native country, with unsullied purity of morals. The sneers of infidels, and the fascinations of pleasure, had no power to divert him from the correct

principles and virtuous habits which had been ingrafted on his mind in early youth."

It is added: "Piety to God was an eminent trait in the character of Dr. Rush. In all his printed works and in all his private transactions, he professed the most profound respect and veneration for the Eternal." And Dr. Allen, after citing many instances of distinguished piety in the medical profession, remarks: "Need I speak of the illustrious Rush, who deemed riches and fame as incomparably less valuable than the religious principles which he received from his parents; and who was accustomed at the close of every day to read in his family a chapter of the Bible, and then to address God in prayer?"

JOHN MORTON,

A delegate from the same State, and for some time a judge of the supreme court, "was a professor of religion and truly an excellent man."

JAMES SMITH,

Also from Pennsylvania, "was for many years a professor of religion, and very regular in his attendance on public worship."

### SAMUEL CHASE

Was a member of the Maryland delegation, and was subsequently appointed by Washington an associate judge of the supreme court of the United States, a station which he continued to occupy for fifteen years. "He was a firm believer in Christianity; and but a short time before his death having partaken of the sacrament, he declared himself to be in peace with all mankind."

### THOMAS STONE

Was also from Maryland, and shared largely in the honours of his State. "He was a professor of religion, and distinguished for a sincere and fervent piety."

### FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE

Was chosen a delegate from Virginia in 1775, and, both before and after that period, received numerous tokens of confidence from his native State. A short sketch of his public life, now before me, says: "It is said that he had embraced the religion of the gospel, and that under its supporting hope and con-

solation, he made his exit in peace from the world."

Let these examples suffice. Such, it is believed, were *many* of those immortal men whose names shall never die. To the true sons of liberty it cannot but be interesting to know, that those whose names they so much revere, and who were so highly honoured of men, were honoured also of God; that they have gone to a reward which mere patriotism can never buy.

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

It is with feelings of sadness that the writer ever reverts to the memory of any one who has ever given evidence of being a believer in Christianity, who has given to the Christian system the assent of a powerful mind, yet who has left the world without leaving behind him evidence that himself has been a partaker of its full excellence. Such have fully adopted Christianity, as a *system of belief*, though they may not have adopted it as a system of religious faith.

It is not to produce in the minds of my readers such a feeling of sadness as this that I thus write; but it is to do an act of justice, to distinguished intellectual excellence, in wrest-

ing from the grasp of infidels, two from among the brilliant names which adorn the annals of modern science. Who would wish to leave the world in any possible doubt whether he were a Christian or an infidel? But if so unfortunate as this, who would not wish his name rescued from so foul a disgrace as an association with infidelity implies?

Benjamin Franklin acknowledged himself, in the early part of his life, to have been sceptical in religion; but we have the testimony of his intimate friend, Dr. William Smith, that "in his maturer years he became a believer in divine revelation." Extracts from his own writings go far to show his respect for religion and sacred things. In one of his letters, referring to our national prosperity, he says: "Had it not been for the justice of our cause, and the consequent interposition of Providence, in which we had faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an atheist I should now have been convinced of the being and government of a Deity. It is he that abases the proud and elevates the humble; may we never forget his goodness, and may our future conduct manifest our gratitude."

The following is found in his *memoirs*, written by himself: "And here let me with all

humility acknowledge, that to Divine Providence I am indebted for the felicity I have hitherto enjoyed. It is that power alone which has furnished me with the means I have employed, and that has crowned them with success. My future fortune is unknown but to Him, in whose hand is our destiny, and who can make our very afflictions subservient to our benefit."

The following letter of Dr. Franklin, found in his works, edited by his grandson, William Temple Franklin, (London edition, vol. iii., p. 279,) addressed to the author of an infidel publication, submitted to him in manuscript, (probably Paine,) also presents special claims to our attention:—

"DEAR SIR,—I have read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument which it contains against a particular providence, though you allow a general providence, you strike at the foundation of all religion. For without the belief of a providence, that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favour particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only

give you my opinion, that though your reasoning is subtle, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequences of printing this piece will be a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good will be done by it? You may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the aid of religion, you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue and disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes habitual, which is the great point of security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is, to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our

most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance.

"If men are so wicked with religion, what would they be without it? I intend this letter itself as a proof of my friendship, and therefore add no professions to it, but subscribe simply."

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## HUMPHREY DAVY.

Of Sir H. Davy's religious opinions and feelings the writer of these sketches knows but little. He is supposed, however, not to have been practically pious. The following striking sentence is found among his writings:—"I envy no quality of the mind or intellect in others; not genius, power, wit, or fancy; but if I could choose what would be most delightful, and I believe most useful to me, I should

prefer a *firm religious belief*, to every other blessing;—for it makes life a discipline of goodness—creates new hopes when all earthly hopes vanish, and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity; makes an instrument of torture and of shame the ladder of ascent to paradise; and, far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions of palms and amaranths, the gardens of the blessed, the security of everlasting joys, where the sensualist and the sceptic view only gloom, decay, and annihilation." His last work, "*Consolations in Travel*," still more fully develops the religious tendency of his mind.

Surely the names of these men cannot with any propriety be added to the lists of infidelity, though frequently there found. How many such there are among us at present, who would start at the idea of having their names, after they are dead, set down among the advocates of an impious and destructive infidelity, or even of an immoral scepticism! Though we may admit they were practical neglecters of this great salvation, they neither of them appear to have been established in unbelief. The one, once sceptical, afterwards

became a believer; the other appears never to have withdrawn time enough from his other pursuits, to examine the subject fully. An infidel, however, he was not.

## WILLIAM JONES.

William Jones was born in London, in 1748. His father dying in his infancy, his early character was developed under the care of his mother, a woman of high character for sensibility and understanding. At the age of sixteen, he entered University College, Oxford, and at twenty-two commenced the study of law.

At the age of twenty-six, were published his commentaries on Asiatic poetry; and from that period his published works show him deeply learned, not only in the literature of the East, but in legal knowledge. In consideration of his attainments in these departments of learning, in 1793 he was appointed to preside in the Supreme Court of Calcutta; and on that occasion he received the honour of knighthood.

Sir William Jones died at the age of forty-eight, but not till he had made great attainments in science and in polite learning. He was eminent as a judge, and for his profound knowledge of the laws of England; he was

distinguished for his attainments in astronomy, chronology, antiquities, music, and botany; he was a good poet, an able critic, and an indefatigable historian; and in his knowledge of the languages has probably been surpassed by few if any. The writer of these sketches thinks of none who can be set in competition with him for a comprehensive knowledge of the languages, unless it be Alexander Murray.

A biographer says: "Before this illustrious scholar went to India, he was by no means free from a sceptical bias. But when he resided in Asia, he investigated with rigid and minute attention, all those intricate theological points which had occasioned his doubts; and the result was, not only his own most complete conviction, but the conviction of several eminent scholars, who, till then, had but slightly attended to the proofs of the verity of the Mosaic writings. These gentlemen, from that time, renounced their doubts and errors, and became, like Sir William himself, not only almost, but altogether Christians."

In the third volume of his "*Asiatic Researches,*" he gives us this valuable testimony in regard to the Scriptures:—"Theological inquiries are no part of my present subject; but I cannot refrain from adding, that the collec-

tion of tracts, which we call from their excellence the Scriptures, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, pure morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence than could be collected within the same compass from all other books that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom. The two parts of which the Scriptures consist, are connected by a chain of compositions, which bear no resemblance in form or style to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian learning. The antiquity of those compositions no man doubts; and the unstrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication is a solid ground of belief, that they were genuine predictions, and consequently inspired."

The last hour of the life of this illustrious character was marked by a solemn act of devotion. "Finding his dissolution rapidly approaching, he desired his attendants to carry him into an inner apartment, where, at his desire, they left him. Returning after a short interval, they found him in a kneeling posture, with his hands clasped, and his eyes fixed towards heaven. As they were removing him he expired."

## JOHN SELDEN.

JOHN SELDEN, a native of Sussex, England, was born in 1584. He is one of those men whose memory the learned and the great have delighted to honour. A short notice in a Biographical Dictionary says of him:—"As a scholar Selden ranks very high. He was not only skilled in the Hebrew and oriental languages, but he was acquainted with all laws, divine and human, and in the stores of a most retentive memory he had treasured up whatever is valuable, interesting, and important, in ancient and modern literature." Whitelock says of him:—"His mind was as great as his learning, and he was as hospitable and as generous as any man." Clarendon has observed: "He was a person whom no character can flatter, or transmit in any expressions equal to his merit and virtue." And the great Grotius has styled him "The glory of the English nation."

This celebrated man was an intimate friend of Sir Matthew Hale, who often stated to Baxter, that Selden was a "resolved, serious Christian."

In a conference with Archbishop Usher, when he was near the end of his days, after

having taken a survey of all kinds of learning, and having read as much perhaps as any man ever did, Selden declared, that "though he had been very laborious in his literary inquiries, and had possessed himself of a great number of valuable books and manuscripts upon all ancient subjects, yet he could rest the happiness of his soul on none of them, except the Holy Scriptures." Well has Simpson said, "This is a perfect eulogium on the sacred volume."

## JAMES GARDINER.

James Gardiner was a native of Scotland, and born in the year 1688. His mother, with great tenderness and solicitude for his future happiness, instructed him in the principles of Christianity; but he early engaged in a military life, and for many years appears to have devoted himself to sensual pursuits. At the age of thirty-one, however, he experienced the converting grace of God, when he reformed the licentious conduct of his youth, and lived ever afterwards in habits of the most correct morals and of the most undisguised piety.

Dr. Doddridge has written the life of this extraordinary man. How he passed that portion of his life devoted to sensuality and vice,

may be inferred from the following quotation: "His firm constitution, than perhaps there hardly ever was a better, gave him great opportunities of indulging in excess; and his good spirits enabled him to pursue his pleasures of every kind, in so alert and sprightly a manner, that multitudes envied him, and called him by a dreadful kind of compliment, *The Happy Rake.* Yet still the checks of conscience, and some remaining principles of so good an education as he had received, would break in upon his most licentious hours; and I particularly remember he told me, that when some of his dissolute companions were congratulating him on his distinguished felicity, a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself, *O that I were that dog!* Such was then his happiness! and such perhaps is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in contempt of religion, and glory in that infamous servitude which they call liberty."

Of the nature of Colonel Gardiner's piety, much may be inferred from the following quotation: "He used constantly to rise at four o'clock in the morning, and to spend his time till six in the secret exercises of devotion, reading, meditation, and prayer; in

which last he contracted such a fervency of spirit, as I believe few men living ever attained. This certainly tended very much to strengthen that firm faith in God, and reverent, animating sense of his presence, for which he was so eminently remarkable, and which carried him through the trials and vicissitudes of life, with such steadiness and with such activity; for he endured and acted as always 'seeing Him who is invisible.' If at any time he was obliged to go out before six in the morning, he rose proportionably sooner; so that when a journey or a march has required him to be on horseback by four, he would be at his devotions at farthest by two. He likewise secured time for retirement in the evening."

To the pious reader, the following extracts from his private correspondence, cannot fail to be interesting. In a letter to his wife, occurs the following:—"O! how ought we to long to be with Christ; which is infinitely better than anything we can propose here! to be there where all complaints shall be forever banished—where no mountains shall separate between God and our souls! And I hope it will be some addition to our happiness, that you and I shall be separated no more; but that, as we have joined in singing the praises

of our glorious Redeemer here, we shall sing them in a much higher strain through an endless eternity."

On another occasion he writes thus:—"What would I have given this day, upon the road, for paper, pen, and ink, when the Spirit of the Most High rested upon me! O! for the pen of a ready writer, and the tongue of an angel, to declare what God has done this day for my soul! But in short it is in vain to attempt it; all that I am able to say, is only this, that my soul has been for some hours joining with the blessed spirits above, in giving glory, and honour, and praise, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever."*

## GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Of Washington as a warrior or a statesman nothing need be said. I shall refer to him only as a Christian; and though we may find his piety of a somewhat-different stamp from that of the subject of my last sketch, yet it is

* See the little work, entitled, "Some remarkable Passages in the Life of Colonel James Gardiner," by Dr. Doddridge. This volume is specially commended to such as would see personal accomplishments, sound understanding, and the multiplied engagements of a public life, combined with distinguished piety.

believed the conclusion will be equally irresistible, that he was really pious. I am not about to contend for the perfection of the Christian character in him, nor to hold him up as a perfect model of Christian piety. On this subject, however, it has been well said, "That few men have been placed in circumstances more unfriendly to the cultivation of Christian virtues,—circumstances which, duly considered, will render it more a matter of wonder that he should have been what he was, rather than that he should fail to be what he was not. Much of his life was spent amidst the confusion of camps and the contentions of cabinets. He was, early in life, thrown upon his own resources, and usually surrounded by persons having little regard for religion, and indeed hostile to it, as an intruder on their beloved pleasures and chosen occupations. And we are constrained to add, that the Church herself did not in every instance then impart that effectual aid to her members, which the most pious and established of them find necessary, in every age, to their spiritual comfort and edification. The day in which he lived was a dark one, religiously considered, and by no means distinguished for such public ministrations as prove most powerful to purify the heart and reform the life. To

these unfavourable accidents should be added the consideration of the closing years of his life being spent in the midst of a triumphant and reigning infidelity." Allusion is here made to the pretended offspring of philosophy and handmaid of liberty, which, originating in France, found many votaries among the great and learned of our own country.

To these considerations should be added, that he was, during nearly his whole life, surrounded by such as had no interest in reporting the evidences of his piety; and that during his last short sickness, circumstances forbade the visitation of clergymen, while the physicians who attended him were irreligious. We have then but little to look to in evidence of his piety, but to his general character, and to some interesting circumstances which have been incidentally preserved. To some of these evidences I will briefly refer.

1. It is admitted on all hands, that his whole life was but an exhibition of patriotism, disinterestedness, integrity, consistency, and truth, and of those high and excellent virtues, public, private, and social, which adorn even the Christian character. I unhesitatingly join with those who have concluded, that mere unaided human nature never exhibited such singular traits of goodness.

2. It is well known, that as a commander he discouraged, by every means in his power, both among the soldiers and his fellow-officers, every species of immorality, such as profane swearing, gambling, and drunkenness, and that he entertained to the practice of duelling the most settled hostility.

3. There is abundant evidence furnished in his letters and other writings, that his religious creed was in accordance with that of the evangelical Churches of our country and of the world. In a letter to the State governors he speaks of "the pure and benign light of revelation," and refers them to "that humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the *Divine Author of our blessed religion*, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation."

4. During his whole life, public and private, he was a scrupulous observer of the Sabbath, and an attendant on all the usual public means of grace. When at Mount Vernon, though nine miles from a place of worship, even in his old age he was seldom absent. While President of the United States, his attendance at church was uniform, and he would not receive company on the Sabbath. During his military life, and even when in command of the

American army, he always observed the Sabbath, and as far as possible had religious services performed in camp; and when that could not be, himself usually rode out to some neighbouring church. Changes of time, place, and fortune, seem to leave him the same. In the French and Indian war, we find him "performing divine service with his regiment, reading the Scriptures, and praying with them when no chaplain could be had," and even "reading the funeral service over the remains of General Braddock, by the light of a torch," and on the day succeeding the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, issuing a general order that "divine service be performed tomorrow in the different brigades and divisions," and recommending its appropriate observance by considerations drawn from religion.

5. There is satisfactory evidence that he was accustomed to partake of the Lord's supper, both at the church where he usually attended and at other places where he chanced to attend worship, even when in command of the army.

6. He observed, *religiously*, days set apart by public authority for humiliation, fasting and prayer. In June, 1774, on such an occasion, he "attended church, and fasted all day."

7. He was familiar with the Holy Scriptures; and there is most conclusive evidence, that he was very uniform in his attendance on the duty of private prayer. This was observed by him in the camp, not less than in the quietude of retired life.

8. Washington died the death of a Christian. *First.* Though he believed from the commencement of the attack that he should not recover, he was perfectly self-collected, arranged his affairs with entire composure of mind, and at no time betrayed any other feeling than that of resignation to the divine will and pleasure. *Secondly.* Though his sufferings were great, he endured them with the most perfect patience and resignation, only remarking, as he did once or twice, "I should have been glad, had it pleased God, to die a little easier, but I doubt not it is for my good." *Thirdly.* "Some hours before his departure, he made request that every person should leave the room, that he might be alone for a short time." This request, considered in connexion with his long-continued habit of private prayer, is full of important meaning. *Fourthly.* Death itself to him had no terrors. "Doctor," said he, a short time before he expired, "I die hard, but I am not afraid to die;" and the same writer, one of the then rectors of Mount Ver-

non parish, says, that in the moment of death, "he closed his eyes for the last time with his own hands, folded his arms decently on his breast, then breathing out, '*Father of mercies, take me to thyself*,' he fell asleep."

It is in view of such evidence that we find the following tribute, in the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge:—

"History furnishes no parallel to the character of Washington. He stands on an unapproached eminence, distinguished almost beyond humanity for self-command, intrepidity, soundness of judgment, rectitude of purpose, and deep, ever-active piety. Washington was a man of prayer. His exalted character was formed under the influence of Christian principles."

Not less honourable is the testimony of an English writer, who says: "Washington was lately a living character, and generally allowed to be one of the first warriors, the first of politicians, and the worthiest of men. This same gentleman is the delight of 'an admiring and astonished world,' and yet—hear it, O ye minute philosophers of degenerate Europe—he was a Christian."

## Revolutionary Officers.

At almost every step in the drawing up of these sketches a difficulty presents itself. Not only do the young and inexperienced seem to be under the delusion, that there is some incongruity between the principles of Christianity and the sterner duties of life, but the same infatuation seems to have seized on those who have written the biographies of our great men. While every other excellence of their character is set in strong relief, and even the personal appearance minutely described, their *religious character*—that on which *they* set their highest value, and that which was the basis of every other excellence which they possessed—is passed over by a single word, or perhaps a mere allusion, or, it may be, left in doubt. This is particularly apt to be the case when reference is made to our military or naval officers; as though indeed these could not be Christians. Let the lives of Colonel Gardiner and of Washington set this question forever at rest, as regards men engaged in military pursuits. But Washington stands not alone among our revolutionary heroes. Many of them were as distinguished for their piety as for their patriotism.

## COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING,

Among the first and the bravest in resistance of British aggression, was a Christian. "The Bible was the object of his habitual study and meditation, and the religion which he had examined and professed in his early manhood received his obedience and support through a long life, and was found an all-sufficient source of comfort, resignation, peace, and satisfaction, on the bed of death."

## COLONEL ISAAC SHELBY,

A native of Maryland, who led on many a hard-fought battle in our Revolution, and whose gallantry and patriotism in our last war were acknowledged not only by his superior officer, but by resolution in the legislature of Kentucky, and by a vote of thanks from congress, awarding a gold medal as a testimony of its sense of his illustrious services, was a Christian. "In the vigour of life, he had dedicated himself to God, and sought an interest in the merits of the Redeemer. He was for many years a member of the Presbyterian Church, and in his latter days he was

the chief instrument in erecting a house of worship on his own land."

MAJOR-GENERAL BENJAMIN LINCOLN,

A NATIVE of Massachusetts, but whose distinguished military talents led congress to appoint him to the command of the Southern army in 1778, "was a practical and rational Christian from his childhood up, and to his practice joined also the profession of his principles, being, during most of his life, a communicant, and for many years a deacon in the Church where he worshipped. Amidst all the licentiousness of the army, no stain came upon his character, and no impurity fell from his lips."

MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN BROOKS,

OF Massachusetts, afterwards governor of that State, "was a Christian in the best sense of the word; in heart, in principle, in action penetrated with the influence of the gospel. He paid throughout life undeviating respect to the sacred offices of religion, and died consoled with its hopes, in possession of his reason to the last."

BRIGADIER-GENERAL ELIEZER BROOKS,

Distinguished among the heroes of White Plains, "was a firm believer in the doctrines of Christianity, and in his advanced years accepted the office of deacon in the Church at Lincoln, Mass. This office he ranked above all others which he had sustained in life."

GENERAL MATTHEW CLARKSON,

One of the heroes of Stillwater, was "amiable, frank, affectionate, pure, and beneficent; and his character was crowned by an exalted piety."

## CHAPTER III.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON—DR. DAVID RITTENHOUSE—CRICHTON—BARATIER — PASCAL — GROTIUS — HORROX — GASSENDI — JOHN JANEWAY—JAMES BRAINERD TAYLOR.

### ISAAC NEWTON.

Isaac Newton was born in Lincolnshire, England, 1642. He has been pronounced "a most celebrated philosopher and mathematician, and one of the greatest geniuses that ever appeared in the world." At the age of eighteen he entered Trinity College; and at twenty-two made his discovery of a new method of infinite series and fluxions. In 1669, he was elected to the mathematical chair at Cambridge; and in 1687 published his *Principia*, which performance has set his name above all the philosophers of both ancient and modern times. In 1703, he was elected president of the Royal Society; and for twenty-five years, till the day of his death, adorned the chair of that learned body. In 1705 he was knighted by Queen Anne, by whom, as well as by George I., he was greatly favoured.

His powers of mind were wonderfully comprehensive and penetrating. Fontenelle says of him, "that in learning mathematics, he

did not study Euclid, who seemed to him too plain and simple, and unworthy of taking up his time. He understood him almost before he read him; a cast of his eye on the contents of the theorems of that great mathematician, seemed to be sufficient to make him master of them." Thomas Dick says:—"Sir Isaac Newton, the fame of whose genius has extended over the whole civilized world, made his discoveries in geometry and fluxions, and laid the foundation of his two celebrated works, his *Principia* and *Optics*, by the time he was twenty-four years of age; and yet these works contain so many abstract, profound, and sublime truths, that only the first-rate mathematicians are qualified to understand and appreciate them." The same writer adds: "Amidst all the sublime investigations of physical and mathematical science in which he engaged, and amidst the variety of books he had constantly before him, the *Bible* was that which he studied with the greatest application; and his meekness and modesty were no less admirable than the variety and extent of his intellectual acquirements." Bishop Watson says: "Newton accounted the Scriptures the most sublime philosophy; and never mentioned the word—GOD—but with a pause."

A biographer says: "To his other great qualities, he added the virtues of piety, and religious infidelity he marked with abhorrence; no remark of levity or indifference on the powers of the Deity, or on revelation, ever was made in his presence without drawing from him the severest censure; and while he made the Bible his favourite study, he employed some portion of his time in proving the great truths of the prophetical writers of Scripture." His readiness to rebuke impiety is illustrated in his Life, as given us by Dr. Brewster: "Immorality and impiety he never permitted to pass unreproved; and when Dr. Halley ventured to say anything disrespectful to religion, he invariably checked him, and said, "I have studied these things—you have not."

Permit me to add the testimony of the pious and learned Dr. Doddridge, to this, the most interesting part of this great man's character. "According to the best information," says he, "whether public or private, I could ever obtain, his firm faith in the divine revelation, discovered itself in the most genuine fruits of substantial virtue and piety; and consequently gives us the justest reason to conclude that he is now rejoicing in the happy effects of it infinitely more than in all the ap-

plause which his philosophical works have produced him, though they have commanded a fame lasting as the world."

## DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

Of whose life can a sketch more properly be made to follow that of Sir Isaac Newton, than of our own Rittenhouse? For the character and works of Newton he cherished the highest veneration; and in his modest and unassuming character, as well as in his wonderful intellectual powers, he strikingly resembled him.

David Rittenhouse was born near Germantown, Penn., April 8, 1732; and was designed by his father for the occupation of a husbandman. In Norristown, which early became his residence, there were no schools at which anything more was taught than reading and writing in the English language and the simplest rules of arithmetic. Beyond these acquisitions he was self-taught.

Mathematics, astronomy, and optics, were among his earliest pursuits, accompanied by a most extraordinary development of mechanical skill. He succeeded in obtaining the use of some books; and he early made himself master of Sir Isaac Newton's Princi-

pia, through the medium of Mott's translation, and studied the science of fluxions; of this invention he conceived himself at first to be the author, nor was he undeceived for some years, when he ascertained that a contest had been carried on between Sir Isaac Newton and Leibnitz, for the honour of the discovery. On this Dr. Rush remarks:—"What a mind was here! without literary friends or society, and with but two or three books, he became, before he reached his twenty-fourth year, the rival of the two greatest mathematicians in Europe!"

A time-piece, a thermometer, and an orrery, all of wonderful ingenuity, and of exquisite workmanship, were successively produced by him.

In 1769, he calculated and observed the *transit* of Venus,—a phenomenon which had been observed but twice before since the creation of the world, and which none then living could ever witness again. The astronomers of Europe had to depend on the observations made in America; and those of Rittenhouse were received with great favour by the whole philosophical world. Mr. Ludlam, one of the vice-presidents of the Philosophical Society of London, and an eminent astronomer, thus writes: "No astronomers could better de-

serve all possible encouragement, whether we consider their care and diligence in making their observations, their fidelity in relating what was done, or the clearness and accuracy of their reasoning on this curious and difficult subject. The more I read the transactions of your society, (the American Philosophical,) the more I honour and esteem the members of it. *There is not another society in the world, that can boast of a member such as* MR. RITTENHOUSE." Dr. Maskelyne, astronomer royal at Greenwich, and the Swedish astronomers, bore a similar testimony. His observations on a comet which made its appearance the next year, attracted nearly equal attention.

"Though so ardently attached to the study of his choice," says the author of a biographical sketch in the National Portrait Gallery, "he had paid attention to theology, and was well acquainted with practical metaphysics; a great reader, a musician, and a poet; had acquired an intimate knowledge of the French, German, and Dutch languages, in which he took great delight to peruse the works of the learned of those countries. His name was known and revered in every place where science was respected. Wherever he went he was honoured."

In 1771, Mr. Rittenhouse was elected one of the secretaries of the American Philosophical Society. In 1789, the honorary degree of doctor of laws was conferred upon him by the College of New Jersey; and in 1791, on the death of Dr. Franklin, he was elected President of the American Philosophical Society. The next year, he was elected a member of the American Academy of Sciences at Boston; and in 1795, a member of the Royal Society of London. This honour had been previously conferred upon only three or four Americans.

Such was Dr. Rittenhouse; and such the proud eminence in the world of letters, to which *he had raised himself.*

The members of his family were mostly of the Society of Friends; and Dr. Rittenhouse never attached himself to any particular Church. In a conversation with the Rev. Dr. Sproat, a short time before his death, he declared that "he could with truth say, that ever since he had examined Christianity and thought upon the subject, he was a firm believer in it; and that he expected salvation only in the way of the gospel."

The biographical sketch before referred to says: "Rittenhouse was not only practically a Christian, but he believed emphatically in

the Christian revelation; forming another triumph over the vague assertion that men of genius are unbelievers. Newton and Rittenhouse will outweigh a host of thoughtless blasphemers." And an English writer thus introduces a quotation from Dr. Rush: "One of the most extraordinary philosophers of the present age was the late David Rittenhouse, of America. Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, who is himself an able philosopher and a determined Christian, observes very justly, when speaking of the decease of Rittenhouse, who left our world January 26, 1796, that it is no small triumph to the friends of revelation to observe, in this age of infidelity, that our religion has been admitted, and even defended, by men of the most exalted understanding, and of the strongest reasoning powers. The single testimony of David Rittenhouse in its favour outweighs the declamations of whole nations against it."

The idea that philosophy is at variance with religion can only be the result of the most consummate ignorance. Let him who doubts this, make it a subject of investigation.

## JAMES CRICHTON.

In "Dick's Philosophy of a Future State," he has selected, as examples of the vigour and comprehension of the human faculties, and as illustrating the variety and extent of the acquisitions of which the human mind is capable, the names of Pascal, Grotius, Crichton, Gassendi, Horrox, Newton, and Baratier. These seem to have been selected purely with reference to the possession of great mental power, without any regard to their religious or moral character. I purpose to inquire how these mighty minds—the ornaments of the intellectual world—have treated the claims of Christianity. Of one of these, Newton, I have already furnished a sketch. Newton was a Christian.

James Crichton, always known in consequence of his distinguished endowments, by the designation of the *Admirable Crichton*, was a Scotchman of the sixteenth century. The year of his birth is not known. He was educated at Perth and at the University of St. Andrews, where he made such wonderful progress, that at the age of twenty, he had run through the whole circle of the sciences, as they were then understood, and could write

and speak to perfection ten different languages. Thus gifted with mental endowments, and aided by all the advantages of a graceful person, elegant manners, and polite accomplishments, he travelled to Paris, where he publicly challenged the most renowned scholars, to dispute with him in any art or science while they pleased, and in twelve different languages. On the appointed day, he appeared at the college of Navarre, and from nine in the morning till six in the evening, he so defeated his opponents, and astonished his auditors, that the president, in admiration, with four of the most eminent professors of the university, presented him with a diamond ring, and a purse of gold, as a token of their approbation. At Rome, at Venice, at Padua, and at Mantua, he attracted equal admiration. At Mantua, he died by violence; and may be said to have lived to no very important purpose, but to show the world a specimen of vast but unsanctified intellectual power.

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## JOHN PHILIP BARATIER.

John Philip Baratier, was born January 19, 1721, at Schwabach, and is justly considered a prodigy of learning and genius. "At the age of five," says Mr. Dick, "he under-

stood the Greek, Latin, German, and French languages; at the age of nine, he could translate any part of the Hebrew Scriptures into Latin, and could repeat the whole Hebrew Psalter; and before he had completed his tenth year, he drew up a Hebrew lexicon of uncommon and difficult words, to which he added many curious critical remarks. In his thirteenth year he published, in two volumes octavo, a translation from the Hebrew of Rabbi Benjamin's "Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa," with historical and critical notes and dissertations; the whole of which he completed in four months. In the midst of these studies, he prosecuted philosophical and mathematical pursuits, and in his fourteenth year, invented a method of discovering the longitude at sea, which exhibited the strongest marks of superior abilities." In his thirteenth year, he was offered, by the university of Halle, the degree of M. A. With a constitution naturally delicate, he could not long endure the excessive application of so gigantic a mind. He died at Halle in his twentieth year.

The only reference I can now meet with to his moral habits is found in the following short passage:—

"In his domestic economy he was very temperate; he ate little flesh, lived totally on

milk, tea, bread, and fruit; he disliked wine; he had an aversion to dancing, music, and the sports of the field, so that he wished for no recreation from study but in walking, or in the conversation of a few friends, whom he loved and courted with all the openness and unreserved gayety of a generous heart."

The writer of these sketches has no other evidence than is here presented, that either of these men was practically pious. Baratier, however, may have been as pious as any of the learned men of his day; and Crichton lived in an age of great moral darkness.

## BLAISE PASCAL.

Pascal was born at Clermont, in the province of Auvergne, 19th June, 1623. He was descended from one of the best families in that province. Young Pascal from his infancy displayed extraordinary abilities; he inquired into the reasons and causes of everything, and never was satisfied but with what appeared most probable and rational. His father, though an excellent scholar and an able mathematician, studiously kept from his son all mathematical books, that his attention might be confined to belles lettres and classical knowledge. Before he had attained his

twelfth year, however, and while immersed in the study of languages, without books and without an instructor he discovered and demonstrated most of the propositions in the first book of Euclid, before he knew that such a book was in existence, to the astonishment of every mathematician; so that, at that early age, he was an inventor of geometrical science. At the age of sixteen he composed a treatise on *Conic Sections*, which, in the judgment of men of the greatest abilities, was viewed as an astonishing effort of the human mind, and was by Des Cartes attributed to the labours of the father, and not to the son. At nineteen years of age he contrived an arithmetical machine, much admired for its ingenuity; and at twenty-three he saw, corrected, and improved the Torricellian experiments; and soon after solved a problem, proposed by Mersennus, which had hitherto perplexed the ablest mathematicians of Europe. By the age of twenty-four he had acquired a proficiency in almost every branch of human knowledge, "when," says Mr. Dick, "his mind became entirely absorbed in the exercises of religion."

Pascal has been spoken of as "perhaps the most brilliant intellect that ever lighted on this lower world," and yet we thus see him at the age of twenty-four, in the language of his

biographer, "in the midst of his increasing reputation, all at once renouncing literary and mathematical pursuits for religion; and after being one of the greatest of philosophers, becoming one of the most humble and penitent of devotees."

The celebrated Boyle, speaking of this distinguished person, says: "A hundred volumes of religious discourses are not of so much avail to confound the impious, as a simple account of the life of Pascal. His humility and his devotion mortify the libertines more than if they were attacked by a dozen missionaries. They can no longer assert that piety is confined to men of little minds, when they behold the highest degree of it in a geometrician of the first rank, the most acute metaphysician, and one of the most penetrating minds that ever existed."

The idea seems almost to have become general, that it is a mark of great sagacity or penetration to entertain sceptical views of religion. The strange error has gone everywhere abroad among the unthinking, that to be a philosopher one must be a sceptic; on the contrary, I do not hesitate to assert that for one who has been instructed in the Bible and in the principles of religion to entertain serious doubts of the inspiration of the one, or

the truth and the excellency of the other, furnishes proof positive either of the depravity of his heart or of the weakness of his intellect. Pascal, with a mind wonderfully comprehensive and sagacious, entertained the most exalted sentiments of the Christian religion, and never had the least doubt of its divine authority.

This information we have from his biographer, who knew him well, and who says, "that by the instructions and example of his father great reverence for religion was early impressed upon his mind, and continued with him through life, and that he was always in a high degree opposed to the principles of infidelity."

To the pious reader, the following lines, found among his papers after his decease, will furnish a pleasing picture of the mind of this extraordinary man :—

"I respect poverty, because Jesus Christ respected it. I respect riches, because they furnish the means of relieving the distressed. I do not return evil to those who have done me an injury. I endeavour to be sincere and faithful to all men; but I have a peculiar tenderness towards those with whom God has caused me to be intimately connected. Whether I am alone or in company, I consider myself as in the sight of God, who will judge my actions,

and to whom I consecrate them all. These are my sentiments; and I daily bless my Redeemer, who has impressed them upon me, and who, by the operation of his grace, has taken away the concupiscence, pride, ambition, and misery, to which I was naturally subject. I owe my deliverance to his power and goodness, having nothing of myself but imbecility and corruption."

In Jesuph's Life of Pascal, it is said: "This great man, during some of the latter years of his life, spent his whole time in prayer and in reading the Holy Scriptures; and in this he took incredible delight." His last words were "May God never forsake me!" and he died full of peace and hope.

## HUGO GROTIUS.

This eminent scholar was born at Delft, in Holland, in 1583. At the age of thirteen he greatly distinguished himself at the University of Leyden. At the age of fourteen he ventured to form literary plans which required an amazing extent of knowledge, and he executed them in such perfection that the literary world was struck with astonishment. In his fifteenth year he accompanied the Dutch ambassador to Paris, where he was received with every

mark of kindness by the court, and presented by Henry IV. with his picture and a gold chain. The University of Paris also paid its respects to this learned youth, and granted him the degree of doctor of laws, before his return to Holland. At the age of seventeen he entered on the profession of an advocate, and pleaded his first cause at Delft, in a manner that acquired for him the greatest reputation. He fully sustained the reputation thus early acquired, by a life filled with vicissitude, and died at the age of sixty-two.

The Scriptures were the favourite study of Grotius. He always devoted a part of the day to them; and wrote a commentary on both the Old and New Testament. He also wrote a treatise on the truth of the Christian religion, which is well known to the Christian student. I will only add the testimony of the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge, a work whose testimony is the more valuable as it is cautiously given:—

"Grotius was master of all that is worth knowing in sacred and profane literature. There was no art or science with which he was not acquainted. He possessed a clear head, an excellent judgment, universal learning, immense reading, and a sincere, unwavering love of truth and Christianity."

## JEREMIAH HORROX.

"JEREMIAH HORROX, a name celebrated in the annals of astronomy, before he attained the age of seventeen had acquired, solely by his own industry and the help of a few Latin authors, a most extensive and accurate knowledge of astronomy and of the branches of mathematical learning connected with it. He composed astronomical tables for himself, and corrected the errors of the most celebrated astronomers of his time. He calculated a transit of the planet Venus across the sun's disc, and was the first of mortals who beheld this singular phenomenon, which is now considered of so much importance in astronomical science."

Such is the brief account given of this young astronomer by Mr. Dick. He was born about 1619, near Liverpool; was educated at Emanuel College, Cambridge; and died prematurely, to the great loss of science, in 1640–1, aged twenty-one. His theory of lunar motion Newton himself afterwards adopted.

A full biography of this distinguished young man we have not access to, but find him referred to in the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge, as "a young and religious

astronomer." To this I add a notice of the important calculation and discovery made by him, which I find in "Burrett's Geography of the Heavens," as illustrating both his love of science and his piety to God.

"The tables of Kepler, constructed upon the observations of Tycho Brahe, indicated a transit of Venus in 1631, but none was observed. Horrox, without much assistance from books and instruments, set himself to inquire into the error of the tables, and found that such a phenomenon might be expected to happen in 1639. He repeated his calculations during the interval, with all the carefulness and enthusiasm of a scholar, ambitious of being the first to predict and observe a celestial phenomenon which, from the creation of the world, had never been witnessed. Confident of the result, he communicated his expected triumph to a confidential friend, residing in Manchester, and desired him to watch for the event and to take observations. So anxious was Horrox not to fail of witnessing it himself, that he commenced his observations the day before it was expected, and resumed them at the rising of the sun on the morrow. But the *very hour* when his calculations led him to expect the visible appearance of Venus upon the sun's disc *was also the ap-*

*pointed hour for the public worship of God on the Sabbath.* The delay of a few minutes might deprive him forever of the opportunity of observing the transit. If its very commencement were not noticed, clouds might intervene and conceal it until the sun should set, and nearly a century and a half would elapse before another opportunity would occur. He had been watching for the event with the most ardent anticipation for eight years, and the result promised much benefit to the cause of science. *Notwithstanding all this, Horrox twice suspended his observations, and twice repaired to the house of God,* the great Author of the bright worlds he delighted to contemplate. When his duty was thus performed, and he had returned to his chamber the second time, his love of science was gratified with full success, and he saw what no mortal eye had observed before.

"If anything can add interest to this incident, it is the modesty with which the young astronomer apologizes to the world for *suspending* his observations at all. 'I observed it,' says he, 'from sunrise till nine o'clock, again a little before ten, and lastly at noon, and from one to two o'clock; the rest of the day being devoted to higher duties, which might not be neglected for these pastimes.'"

## PETER GASSENDI.

GASSENDI was a celebrated philosopher of France, and was born 22d January, N. S., 1592, near Digne, in Provence. At the age of four he declaimed little sermons of his own composition, and even in infancy amused himself by gazing at the moon and stars. At the age of seven he spent whole nights in observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, of which he acquired at that early age a considerable knowledge. The taste for astronomy, thus early formed, he never relaxed till his reputation became so extensive that in 1645 he was appointed professor of mathematics at Paris. Meantime he had been engaged in other and various pursuits. At the age of sixteen he was professor of rhetoric at Digne, and three years after succeeded his old master as professor of philosophy at Aix..

He wrote the life of Tycho Brahe, with an account of Copernicus, Purbachius, and Pyro Montanus. He maintained a public controversy with Des Cartes, and with Leibnitz; and his correspondence shows that he was the friend of Kepler, Galileo, Kircher, and other distinguished scholars of his day.

Mr. Dick himself says: "His vast know-

ledge of philosophy and mathematics was ornamented by a sincere attachment to the Christian religion, and a life formed upon its principles and precepts;" which is fully sustained by the notices of biographical dictionaries.

Having taken a review of those distinguished men, selected from the whole world, as specimens of vast mental power and of great extent of learning, may I not ask the young who have looked over these sketches, to pause? Let them contrast these bright names with the sceptics of our day, for they cannot be *compared.* Philosophy! half the pretended sceptics among us do not know the meaning of the word! Newton accounted "the Scriptures of God the most sublime philosophy." And says the immortal Chillingworth, "Propose to me anything out of the Bible, and require whether I believe it or not, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart; as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this—God hath said so, therefore it is true." This was a part of *his* philosophy. Those who have walked in this light—the light of the revelation of God—*have lain down in peace;* but God has said, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that walk in the light of

*your* fire, and of the sparks that *ye* have kindled; this shall ye have at mine hand—*ye shall lie down in sorrow.*" And how fearfully has this threat been executed!

## JOHN JANEWAY.

THERE is no scene more full of moral grandeur, than that which presents the young man of talent and mental worth, with the world spread out before him, and surrounded by the objects of worldly ambition, *devoting himself* to the cause of religion and of human happiness. There is such a thing as a profession of religion from sinister considerations. But who, from early life, retires from the pursuit of worldly knowledge and philosophy, and devotes the energies of a powerful and generous mind to the holy duties of religion, and to the self-sacrificing work of saving his fellow-men, from sinister considerations? Even the unfair spirit of infidelity itself has rarely charged such a course to any worse influence than that of superstition and enthusiasm; but unfortunately the spirit of infidelity, after making such a charge, either refuses to be a witness of that scene which tests the strength of these principles and the foundation of such men's hopes, and retires *from the bed of death*, as an

unwelcome place, or turns away,—in the exercise of that omnipotent power with which man is armed to work out his own ruin,—still to disbelieve.

The ingenuous young man, who is capable of appreciating either intellectual or moral excellence, will not refuse to contemplate the life and early death of a scholar.

JOHN JANEWAY was born in the year 1633, at Tylly, in Hertfordshire. At the age of twelve years, he had made a considerable proficiency in mathematical science, and in the study of astronomy, and other branches of useful learning. At seventeen, he was admitted to King's College, in Cambridge. At eighteen, it pleased God to enlighten his understanding, and to discover to him, that the knowledge of his Creator, and the consciousness of an interest in his love, through Jesus Christ, was infinitely superior to every attainment and possession of this world. At this time he became sensible that astronomy surveyed but a molehill, in comparison with the great object which the religion of Jesus contemplates. He now became wholly occupied with divine contemplations, and tasted so much sweetness in the knowledge of Christ, that it was discernible in his very appearance, and he "counted everything but dross and

dung, in comparison of the knowledge of Christ and him crucified." Not that he looked upon human learning as useless; but when fixed below Christ,—not improved for Christ, or set in opposition to Christ,—he looked upon wisdom as folly, upon learning as madness, and upon genius as a curse, which would make a man more like the devil, more fit for his service, and put a greater accent upon our misery in another world.

At the age of twenty, he was admitted a fellow of his college. Still, however, he went on with his religious contemplations, and became so mighty in prayer, and other sacred exercises, that he seemed to forget the weakness of his body. He studied much, prayed much, and laboured much in every way he could contrive to be of use to mankind, and to promote the honour of the Divine Being. Sickness came; and his disorder, which was of the consumptive kind, increased rapidly upon him, but yet with some intervals of relief. During the greatest part of his sickness, however, he was so filled with love, and peace, and joy, that human language sinks under what he saw and felt; he talked as if he had been in the third heaven,—breaking out, every now and then, into ecstasies of joy and praise.

Much of his language has been preserved.

About forty-eight hours before his dissolution, he said:—"Praise is now my work, and I shall be engaged in that sweet employment forever. Come, let us lift up our voice in praise. I have nothing else to do. I have done with prayer, and all other ordinances. I have almost done conversing with mortals. I shall presently be beholding Christ himself, who died for me, and loved me, and washed me in his blood. I shall, in a few hours, be in eternity, singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon the mount Sion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant! I shall hear the voice of much people, and be one among them who say —'Hallelujah! salvation, glory, and honour, and power be unto the Lord our God!' And again we say, Hallelujah! Methinks I stand as it were one foot in heaven and the other on earth. Methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry my soul to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be forever with the Lord in glory. And who can choose but rejoice in all this?"

In such a rapturous strain as this he continued, full of praise, full of admiration, full

of joy, till at length, with abundance of faith and fervency, he cried aloud, — "Amen! Amen!" and soon after expired. Thus did this favoured and happy spirit take its leave of the world. He died in the twenty-fifth year of his age.

## JAMES BRAINERD TAYLOR.

THE strong consolations which are felt by the sick and the dying, whose minds have become enlarged by the contemplation of sacred things, and whose moral feelings by cultivation have become equal to the sublimity of such a scene, Dr. Priestley considers as *enthusiasm*. But for the sanction of some such names, who would not exclaim—O, the stupidity of infidelity! But is not its stupidity the more apparent in its power which is thus exhibited, of totally obscuring the moral vision of intelligent and thinking man?

From age to age religion is the same; and from age to age shall its effects on the human heart be the same. The scene of Christian triumph detailed in the last, occurred near two centuries since, in England. How similar to this, was the closing scene of the life of Professor Hubbard, detailed in a former part of this work.

James Brainerd Taylor. This excellent young man was born at Middle Haddam, Connecticut, April 15, 1801. His first deep impressions of religion were received from the remarks of a brother under his father's roof. When placed as a clerk in the store of a merchant of New-York, he attended the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Romeyn, and then at the age of fifteen first united in the commemoration of redeeming love. He soon engaged in the work of Sabbath-school instruction, and by every other method in his power sought to promote his Redeemer's kingdom upon earth. In May, 1819, he was present at the sailing of Dr. Scudder with other missionaries for Ceylon, and from that time felt that he must renounce the merchant's life for the ministerial life. His friends approving this course, he entered the academy of Lawrenceville, New-Jersey, in 1820, and in November, 1823, joined the sophomore class at Nassau Hall. His whole academic life was characterized by communion with God, zeal in the performance of his duties, and unquenchable desires, coupled with untiring efforts, to be useful. Twenty or thirty souls, it is believed, were turned to God through his instrumentality. His example also is a complete solution of the question—"Can a student enjoy religion at college?"

His own language is: "Their walls cannot shut out the Lord, and where he is, there is heaven. I do not find the obstacles I anticipated. My room has been made a Bethel; and I find it is growing better and better, instead of diminishing. My cup overflows." And about two years after, he says: "I have had during the last thirteen months the witnessing of God's Spirit with mine that I am born from above, and am travelling towards heaven. The fruit of the Spirit has been from day to day, love, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." In September, 1826, Mr. Taylor, having finished his collegiate course, left Princeton for New-Haven, to pursue the study of theology. Early in 1827, he was seized with hemorrhage at the lungs. This cutting off his cherished hopes, must have been truly bitter, yet such grace was given him, that we hear him pronounce it "sweet—sweet—sweet, beyond expression." In January, 1829, he visited Georgia for his health; returned to Connecticut apparently better, in the summer; received license from the Middlesex Association; but soon found it necessary to return to the South. He died at the Union Theological Seminary, in Prince Edward, Virginia, March 28, 1829; not quite twenty-eight years of age, but in full assurance of a glori-

ous immortality. On his dying-bed, he remarked, "that he had endeavoured to live in such a way, that when he came to die he should have nothing to do but to die." His last words were, "Strive! strive—!" His friend inquiring, "Strive to do what?" he added, "To enter into the kingdom of heaven." Thus was his ruling passion strong in death. What he exhorted others to be while living, what he was himself, that, though dead, he yet speaketh, "Strive to be *uncommon* Christians!"

## CHAPTER IV.

JOHN CARVER—WILLIAM BRADFORD—EDWARD WINSLOW—JOHN WINTHROP—JOHN ENDICOTT—JONATHAN BELCHER—JAMES BOWDOIN—SAMUEL ADAMS—JOHN BROOKS—SAMUEL PHILLIPS—WILLIAM PHILLIPS—ISAAC PARKER—THEOPHILUS PARSONS.

### Governors of Plymouth Colony.

### JOHN CARVER

Was the first governor of Plymouth colony. He was one of the first emigrants, in the Mayflower, and was one of the company who landed upon the rock of Plymouth. He was unanimously elected governor of the colony, and was distinguished for his prudence, his disinterestedness, and his integrity. The interests of the colony were his first care, and the people confided in him as their friend and father.

Says a biographer: "Piety, humility, and benevolence, were eminent traits in his character. In the time of the general sickness which befell the colony, after he had himself recovered, he was assiduous in attending the sick and performing the most humiliating services for them, without any distinction of persons or characters."

## WILLIAM BRADFORD

Was the second governor of Plymouth colony; and such was his reputation, that for thirty years he was placed at the head of government—that is, as long as he lived, with the exception of five years, when, at his own request, the people did not re-elect him.

A biographer says: "After an infirm and declining state of health for a number of months, he was suddenly seized by an acute disease, May 7, 1657. In the night his mind was so enraptured by contemplations upon religious truth and the hopes of futurity, that he said to his friends in the morning: 'The good Spirit of God has given me a pledge of my happiness in another world, and the first fruits of eternal glory.' The next day he was removed from the present state of existence, aged sixty-eight. His life was exemplary and useful. He was watchful against sin, a man of prayer, and conspicuous for holiness."

## EDWARD WINSLOW

Was the third governor of Plymouth colony. He shared largely in the confidence of the colony, and was twice, or oftener, sent to Eng-

land as an agent, and while there he exerted his influence to form the Society for Propagating the Gospel in New-England, which was incorporated in 1649, and of which he was an active member. Governor Winslow was a decided Christian.

Such were the men who were placed at the head of affairs in the early periods of our country's history; and it is to them and their pious influence we are indebted for the glorious results which have followed.

## Governors of Massachusetts Colony.

### JOHN WINTHROP

Was first governor of Massachusetts, and was annually elected for eleven years. His time, his exertions, his interests, were all devoted to the infant plantation. "He was a most faithful and upright magistrate, and exemplary Christian."

### JOHN ENDICOTT,

Elected governor of Massachusetts in 1644, three years after Governor Winthrop, was a sincere and zealous Puritan, though he was more rigid in his principles and severe in the execution of the laws against those who differed

from the religion of the colony, than could be justified except by a reference to the spirit of that age. So far as scepticism is concerned, he was devoted to the cause of Christianity.

The early governors of Massachusetts colony are nearly all of them believed to have been religious. If we come down one hundred years in the history of the colonies it is still the same.

## JONATHAN BELCHER

Was appointed governor of Massachusetts and New-Hampshire in 1730, which office he filled for eleven years. He was subsequently governor of the province of New-Jersey, and was the chief patron and benefactor of Princeton College. He possessed, in an uncommon degree, gracefulness of person, dignity of deportment, and an unwavering regard to what he judged to be duty. The highest traits of his character rested on his deep and unaffected piety.

A biographer says of him: "He seems to have possessed, in addition to his other accomplishments, that piety whose lustre is eternal. His religion was not a mere formal thing which he received from tradition, or professed in conformity to the custom of the country in which he lived; but it impressed his heart and

governed his life. He had such views of the majesty and holiness of God, of the strictness and purity of the divine law, and of his own unworthiness and iniquity, as made him disclaim all dependence on his own righteousness, and led him to place his whole hope for salvation on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared to him an all-sufficient and glorious Saviour. He expressed the humblest sense of his own character, and the most exalted views of the rich, free, and glorious grace offered in the gospel to sinners. His faith worked by love, and produced the genuine fruits of obedience. It exhibited itself in a life of piety and devotion, of meekness and humility, of justice, truth, and benevolence. He searched the Holy Scriptures with the greatest diligence and delight. In his family he maintained the worship of God, himself reading the volume of truth, and addressing in prayer the Majesty of heaven and of earth, as long as his health and strength would possibly admit. In the hours of retirement he held intercourse with Heaven, carefully redeeming time from the business of this world, to attend to the more important concerns of another. Though there was nothing ostentatious in his religion, yet he was not ashamed to avow his attachment to the gospel

of Christ, even when he exposed himself to ridicule and censure. He was deeply interested in the progress of holiness and religion; and as he approached the termination of his life he often expressed his desire to depart, and to enter the world of glory."

## Governors of Massachusetts.

### JAMES BOWDOIN,

SECOND governor of Massachusetts after the adoption of her constitution, was not eminent simply as a statesman, but as a philosopher. It was not *elevated place* that made him a great man. He graduated at Harvard College in 1745, where he was greatly distinguished for his genius and his superior attainments. Though left, at the age of twenty-one, in possession of an ample fortune, and thus having it put in his power to gratify all the giddy desires of youth, he, with a maturity of wisdom under such circumstances too rarely equalled, marked out for himself a course of literary and scientific research, to which he adhered through life.

He held several responsible offices under the provincial government; and in 1775, a year the most critical and important to America,

he was elected president of the council of Massachusetts, which office he continued to fill most of the time till the adoption of the State constitution. Of the convention which formed this instrument he was president, and was the second governor under it. All these offices were filled with wisdom, firmness, and integrity.

Mr. Bowdoin was not less distinguished for his literary character. Suffice it to say, he received from the University of Edinburg, as well as from several others, the degree of LL.D., and was elected a member of the Royal Society of London and of Dublin. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences, of which he was the first president, was formed under his influence.

In relation to his religious character, a biographer remarks: "He was deeply convinced of the truth and excellence of Christianity, and it had a constant effect on his life. As the hour of his departure approached he expressed his satisfaction in the thought of going to the full enjoyment of God and his Redeemer."

## SAMUEL ADAMS,

Successor of Governor Bowdoin as chief magistrate of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, was briefly noticed as one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. He was an eminent Christian.

## JOHN BROOKS.

Among the more recent governors of that State, who have been pious, and have already gone to reap the eternal rewards of virtue, my mind fixes on John Brooks, LL.D. The name of Dr. Brooks was mentioned among the revolutionary officers, but is deserving of more particular notice. He served his country in both wars, and filled many high offices in his State, besides the chief magistracy.

He died a member of the Church in Medford. A short time before his death, he said: "I see nothing terrible in death. In looking to the future I have no fears. I know in whom I have believed; and I feel a persuasion that all the trials appointed me, past or present, will result in my future and eternal happiness. I look back upon my past life with humility. I am sensible of many imper-

fections that cleave to me. I know that the present is neither the season nor the place in which to begin the preparation for death. Our *whole* life is given us for this great object, and the work of preparation should be early commenced, and be never relaxed till the end of our days. To God I can appeal, that it has been my humble endeavour to serve him in sincerity, and wherein I have failed I trust in his grace to forgive. I now rest my soul on the mercy of my adorable Creator, through the only mediation of his Son, our Lord. O what a ground of hope is there in that saying of an apostle, that God is, in Christ, reconciling a guilty world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them! In God I have placed my eternal all, and into his hands I commit my spirit!"

## Lieutenant-Governors of Massachusetts.

### SAMUEL PHILLIPS, LL.D.,

Was graduated at Harvard College in 1771. In 1775 he was a member of the provincial congress, and was constantly in public office till the period of his death in 1802, when he was lieutenant-governor of the commonwealth.

Dr. Phillips was distinguished as the bene-

factor of learning. He projected the academy at Andover, and was much concerned in establishing that, as well as the academy at Exeter, which were founded by his father and uncle. To these institutions he was a distinguished benefactor. It is worthy of remark, as illustrating the force of a worthy example, that his widow and son were among the principal founders of the theological seminary at Andover.

A biographer says: "Such was his superiority to the pride of wealth and of power, and such his benevolence and humility, that when honoured with public applause and raised to eminence he would frequently spend the interval between the morning and evening services of the Sabbath, in the house of God, for the purpose of reading some pious book to those whose distant habitations prevented them from returning home. He was careful to impart religious instruction to his family, and he led its daily devotions with humility, fervour, and eloquence. He appeared to be continually governed by love to the Supreme Being, and by the desire of imitating his benevolence and doing good. His deep views of evangelical doctrine and duty, of human depravity and mediatorial mercy, formed his heart to humility, condescension, and kind-

ness, and led him continually to depend on the grace of God through the atonement of his Son."

## WILLIAM PHILLIPS

Was also lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts at the time of his death in 1817. He was a deacon in the old South Church, Boston, for the last twenty-three years of his life, and has been called by the enviable appellation of the *Christian philanthropist.*

"Deacon Phillips," says a biographer, "was an active member of many charitable societies. He was, at the time of his decease, president of the Massachusetts Bible Society. For a series of years his charities had been from $8,000 to $11,000 annually. Many widows and fatherless children were by him rescued from want. He bequeathed to Phillips Academy $15,000; to the Theological Institution at Andover, $10,000; to the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, the Massachusetts Bible Society, the Foreign Mission Board, the Congregational Society, the Education Society, and the Massachusetts General Hospital, each $5,000; to the Medical Dispensary $3,000; to the Female Asylum, and the Asylum for Boys, each $2,000; in all, $62,000.

### Chief Justices of Massachusetts.

FROM among the chief justices of Massachusetts, who have been distinguished for piety and learning, I select two. The ground of the selection is, that they have lived so recently, that everybody remembers them to have been esteemed eminent jurists.

### ISAAC PARKER, LL.D.,

WAS born in Boston, in 1768, and graduated at Harvard College, in 1786. He commenced the practice of law in the then district of Maine, and was elected a member of congress. In 1806, he was appointed a judge of the supreme court; and in 1814, was made chief justice, of which office he, with high reputation and faithfulness, discharged the duties sixteen years—till the day of his death. He died suddenly, May 25th, 1830, of apoplexy.

His biographer says of him: "He was a distinguished scholar and friend of literature. For eleven years he was a trustee of Bowdoin College, and for twenty years an overseer of Harvard College. He was a man of great

moral worth, and a firm believer in the Christian religion."

THEOPHILUS PARSONS, LL. D.,

Preceded Chief Justice Parker by a few years, in this important office. He too graduated at Harvard, and studied law with Judge Bradbury, of Falmouth, now Portland, and kept the grammar-school. When the town was burnt by the British, he returned to his father's, and soon opened an office in Newburyport. In 1779 he was a member of the convention which formed the constitution of Massachusetts; he was also, in 1789, a member of the State convention, which adopted the Constitution of the United States. He removed to Boston in 1800. After an extensive practice of thirty-five years, he succeeded Chief Justice Dana, in 1806. Not only was he a profound lawyer, but an excellent classical scholar, and a skilful mathematician. Judge Parker, in a sketch given by him of this eminent jurist, has expressed his opinion, that, had he lived in England, he would have been made lord chancellor, or lord chief justice. He died in 1813, aged sixty-three.

In reference to the religious character of Chief Justice Parsons, I wish to direct special

attention to this fact, that with him the profession of a belief in Christianity was not the effect of some early or casual impulse, which led him to adopt the Christian faith without investigation; but was the result of the most patient examination of evidence, by a vigorous, a mature, and a well-disciplined mind. It was in quite the latter part of his life, that he joined the Church in Boston, of which Dr. Kirkland was the pastor. "I examined," he was accustomed to say to his friends, "the proof, and weighed the objections to Christianity, many years ago, with the accuracy of a lawyer; and the result was so entire a conviction of its truth, that I have only to regret that my belief has not more completely influenced my conduct." Two days before his death, he repeated his strong conviction to Dr. Kirkland in the following terms: "I could as soon doubt the existence of God himself, as the truth of the Christian religion." Well has it been said, "The judgment of such a man ought to be generally known."

## CHAPTER V.

PROFESSOR JOHN WINTHROP—FRANCIS BACON—ROBERT BOYLE —JOHN LOCKE—JOSEPH ADDISON—DESCARTES—REID—STEWART—BROWN—COLERIDGE—JOSHUA REYNOLDS—SAMUEL JOHNSON—EDMUND BURKE—JAMES NECKAR.

### JOHN WINTHROP.

In the sketch given of Rittenhouse, it was said that "he calculated and observed the *transit* of Venus, a phenomenon which had been observed but *twice* before since the creation of the world, and which no one then living could ever witness again." We have since seen, that this phenomenon was *first* calculated and observed by J. Horrox, a young religious astronomer of England. The subject of this sketch was among the few observers of the *second* calculated transit of Venus. And in passing, it is perhaps deserving of remark, that of the three persons appointed by the American Philosophical Society, to superintend the observation of the *third* of these rare phenomena two at least were religious,—Rittenhouse and Rev. Mr. Ewing. Of the character of the third, Dr. Owen Biddle, I have no knowledge. And yet the irreligious would have us believe, that philosophy and scepti-

cism are synonymous terms! But to our proposed sketch.

John Winthrop, LL.D., F.R.S., Hollis professor of mathematics and natural philosophy in Harvard College, was a son of Adam Winthrop, a member of the council, and a descendant of the governor of Massachusetts. He was graduated in 1732. In 1738 he was appointed professor in the place of Mr. Greenwood. He immediately entered upon the duties of this office, and discharged them with fidelity and high reputation through life. In 1761, he sailed to St. Johns, in New-Brunswick, to observe the transit of Venus over the sun's disc, June 6th, agreeably to the recommendation of Mr. Hailly. When the day arrived, he was favoured with a fine, clear morning, and he enjoyed the inexpressible satisfaction of observing a phenomenon which had never before been seen, excepting by Mr. Horrox, in 1639, by any inhabitant of the earth. He died at Cambridge, May 3, 1779. aged sixty-four. He was distinguished for his very intimate acquaintance with mathematical science. His talents for investigating and communicating truth were very rare. In the variety and extent of his knowledge he has seldom been equalled. He had deeply studied the policies of different ages; he had read the

principal fathers; and he was thoroughly acquainted with the controversy between Christians and deists. His firm faith in the Christian religion was founded upon an accurate examination of the evidences of its truth, and the virtues of his life added a lustre to his intellectual powers and his scientific attainments. In his family he devoutly maintained the worship of the Supreme Being; while he himself attended upon the positive institutions of the gospel, he could not conceive what reason any one who called himself a Christian could give for neglecting them. The day before his death he said:—"The hope that is set before us in the New Testament is the only thing which will support a man in his dying hour. If any man build on any other foundation, in my apprehension his foundation will fail."

Professor Winthrop published several scientific papers; and his accurate observations of the transit of Mercury in 1740, were honourably noticed by the Royal Society of London.

## FRANCIS BACON.

Francis Bacon was born January 22, 1561. At an early age he gave promise of those talents which distinguished him in his more mature years, so that he attracted the notice of Queen Elizabeth, who familiarly called him her young lord keeper. He entered Trinity College when he was in his twelfth year; and by the time he was sixteen years old, he had made great proficiency in the learning of those times, so that he already began to project those improvements in science, which paved the way for its complete reformation. At the age of nineteen, he wrote a work, entitled, "Of the State of Europe," in which he gave the most astonishing proofs of the early maturity of his judgment. Soon after his father's death, he commenced the study of the common law; it was, however, impossible that a genius that could range through the whole circle of the sciences, should confine itself to so dry a study. In his moments of leisure, therefore, we find him taking a view of the state of learning, and devising means for supplying the defects and correcting the errors he had detected. A treatise which he published about this period, entitled, "The Greatest Birth of

Time," but which is now lost, appears to have exhibited the groundwork of that splendid design, which was afterwards disclosed more fully in his "Grand Instauration of the Sciences." In 1603, he was chosen a member of parliament; and in July of the same year received the honour of knighthood. The next year, he was made one of his majesty's council. In 1605, he published a work on "The Proficiency and Advancement of Learning," first in English and afterwards in Latin, which gained him much celebrity. In 1607, Sir Francis was appointed solicitor-general, after which his practice increased so much, that he was retained in almost all great causes. In 1610, appeared his book "On the Wisdom of the Ancients," in which is exhibited great depth and variety of knowledge. In 1611, he was made a judge of the Marshal's Court, and two years after, he succeeded Sir Henry Hobart as attorney-general. While in this office, he exerted himself much to put a stop to the pernicious practice of duelling; and his eloquent and learned charge on this subject, in the Star-Chamber, so pleased the lords of the council, who were present, that they ordered it to be printed and published with the decree of the court. In 1617, Sir Francis succeeded Chancellor Egerton, with the title of lord

keeper; and soon after, the king going on a visit to Scotland, he was intrusted with the conduct of public affairs in his absence, and presided at the council. In the beginning of 1619, he was made lord high chancellor of England, had the title of Baron Verulam conferred upon him, and shortly after, the dignity of Viscount St. Albans.

Amidst the multiplicity and variety of engagements, in which his high station involved him, he still found time for his favourite study of philosophy. In 1620, he published his most finished performance, under the title of "*Novum Organum Scientiarum*," which formed the sequel to his "*Grand Instauration of the Sciences.*" This work was highly appreciated by the learned men of his time, who regarded it as a standard of true philosophical inquiry; and later times have not been unjust to his memory, in styling him, "The Father of the Inductive Philosophy."

After this, he became unfortunate and retired to private life. During this period, he wrote his "History of Henry VII.;" "Essays, or, Counsels Civil and Moral;" and the "Third, Fourth, and Fifth parts of the Grand Instauration of the Sciences," by which last work in particular he enlarged the boundaries of human science beyond all who had gone before

him, as both individuals and learned societies of all the most civilized nations of Europe have freely acknowledged.

After mentioning his death, which occurred on the 9th of April, 1626, the biographical sketch, of which the foregoing is little more than an abridgment, says: "Thus died Lord Bacon, of whom it is little to say, that he was one of the greatest philosophers of modern times. To him belongs the praise of striking out a new path to science, and rescuing it from the load of metaphysical jargon which had overwhelmed and nearly extinguished it. Goethe says, 'He drew a sponge over the table of human knowledge.' His contemporaries could not fully appreciate the extent of his genius, and the value of his labours. Sensible of this himself, he says in his will: 'My name and memory I bequeath to foreign nations and to my own countrymen after some time be passed over!' With regard to physics, if the learned of our times have made more brilliant discoveries, few will deny that it was Bacon who led the way to those discoveries, and laid the foundation of the sciences in the most solid and decisive experiments."

In the Spectator, (No. 554,) I find the following just tribute to the memory of this

great philosopher:—"One of the most extensive and improved geniuses we have had any instance of in our own nation, or in any other, was that of Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam. This great man, by an extraordinary force of nature, compass of thought, and indefatigable study, had amassed to himself such stores of knowledge as we cannot look upon without amazement. His capacity seemed to have grasped all that was revealed in books before his time; and, not satisfied with that, he began to strike out new tracks of science, too many to be travelled over by any one man in the compass of the longest life. These, therefore, he could only mark down, like imperfect coastings on maps, or supposed points of land, to be faster discovered and ascertained by the industry of after ages, who should proceed upon his notices or conjectures."

In the Tattler, (No. 267,) I also find drawn a fine character of this extraordinary man:—"Sir Francis Bacon was a man who, for greatness of genius and compass of knowledge, did honour to his age and country, I could almost say, to human nature itself. He possessed at once all those extraordinary talents which were divided among the greatest authors of antiquity. He had the sound, distinct, comprehensive knowledge of Aristotle, with the

beautiful lights, graces, and embellishments of Cicero. One does not know which to admire most in his writings, the strength of reason, force of style, or brightness of imagination."

Lord Bacon was a serious believer in Christianity. This might be inferred from a passage in his *Essays*, (No. 16,) "A little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism, but depths in philosophy bring men's minds about to religion!" This remark of one of the greatest of men, which is equally applicable to every species of infidelity as to atheism, is specially commended to the consideration of the reader.

His piety becomes more apparent in a prayer found among his papers written by his own hand. The following short extracts must suffice:—

"Remember, O Lord, how thy servant has walked before thee; remember what I have first sought, and what has been principal in my intentions. I have loved thy assemblies; I have mourned for the divisions of thy Church; I have delighted in the brightness of thy sanctuary; I have ever prayed unto thee, that the vine which thy right hand hath planted in this nation might have the former and the latter rain, and that it might stretch its

branches to the seas and to the floods. If any have been my enemies, I thought not of them, neither has the sun gone down upon my displeasure. Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more so. I have sought thee in the courts, the fields, and the gardens; but I have found thee in thy temples.

"Thousands have been my sins, and ten thousand my transgressions; but thy sanctifications have remained with me, and my heart, through thy grace, hath been an unquenched coal upon thine altar.

"O Lord, my strength! I have, from my youth, met with thee in all my ways—in thy fatherly compassions, in thy merciful chastisements, and in thy most visible providences. Just are thy judgments upon me for my sins, which are more in number than the sands of the sea, but which have no proportion to thy mercies. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for my Saviour's sake, and receive me into thy bosom or guide me in thy ways."

The retirement of Lord Bacon was much spent in studying the great truths of religion, and his strongest consolations in adversity seem to have been drawn from this divine source.

## ROBERT BOYLE.

THE article of the Spectator, from which a quotation was made in my last sketch, after alluding to Lord Bacon, says: "The excellent Mr. Boyle was the person who seems to have been designed by nature to succeed to the labours and inquiries of that extraordinary genius I have just mentioned. By innumerable experiments he in a great measure filled up those plans and outlines of science which his predecessor had sketched out. His life was spent in the pursuit of nature through a great variety of forms and changes, and in the most rational as well as devout adoration of its divine Author."

Robert Boyle was born at Lismore, in Ireland, Jan. 26, 1626, the year that Bacon died. In early life he prosecuted his studies with great success, first at Eaton, under private tutors, and lastly at Geneva. After having travelled over various parts of the continent he settled in England, and devoted himself to science, especially to natural philosophy and to chemistry; and to the close of his existence he unremittingly persevered in his scientific pursuits.

It is unnecessary to particularize his at-

tainments. As a philosopher, he is admitted on all hands to rank with Bacon and with Newton. The learned Boerhaave, who cannot be accused of adulation or of partiality, says: "Boyle, the ornament of his age and country, succeeded to the genius and inquiries of the great Verulam. Which of all Boyle's writings shall I recommend? All of them; to him we owe the secrets of fire, air, water, animals, vegetables, fossils, so that from his works may be deduced the whole system of natural knowledge."

His knowledge and the extent of his researches were scarcely equalled but by his modesty. He was one of the first who laid the foundation of the Royal Society, yet refused the presidency when offered to him. He likewise modestly declined the provostship of Eaton, which Charles II., unasked, bestowed on him as the reward of his splendid talents. The honour of a peerage he also declined. In this trait of character how does he resemble the great of every age! Witness Socrates, and Sir William Jones, and Newton, and Davy, as also our own Rittenhouse and the late lamented Bowditch.

Boyle was a consistent and unwavering Christian. "Deists," says he, "must, to maintain their negative creed, swallow greater im-

probabilities than Christians, to maintain the positive creed of the apostles. And they must think it fitter to believe that chance, or nature, or superstition, should perform wonderful and hardly-credible things than that the great Author of nature, God, should be able to do so." He speaks of the Bible as a "matchless volume," and says, "It is impossible we can study it too much or esteem it too highly."

His piety was so conspicuous as to attract the special attention of the king, and of the two great ministers of state, Southampton and Clarendon, by the latter of whom he was solicited to take on himself the duties of a clergyman. This, after mature deliberation, he declined, mainly, as we are told by Bishop Burnet, because he "did not feel within himself any motion or tendency of mind, which he could safely esteem a call from the Holy Spirit, and therefore he did not venture to take holy orders, lest he should be found to have lied unto it."

"His knowledge," says Bishop Burnet, "was of so vast an extent, that if it were not for the variety of the vouches in their several sorts, I should be afraid to say all I know. He carried the study of the Hebrew very far into the rabbinical writings, and the other

oriental tongues. He had read so much of the fathers that he had formed a clear judgment of all the eminent ones; he had read a vast deal on the Scriptures, had gone very nicely through the various controversies in religion, and was a true master of the whole body of divinity; he entertained so profound a veneration for the Deity that the very name of God was never mentioned by him without a pause and an observable stop in his discourse.* To those who conversed most with him, in his inquiries into nature, it was obvious that it was his leading object, in that, on which as he had his own eye constantly fixed, so he took care to put others often in mind of it, viz., to raise in himself and others more exalted thoughts of the greatness, and glory, and wisdom, and goodness of the Deity. Such was the impression of this upon his own mind that he concludes the article of his will, which has a reference to the Royal Society, in these words: "Wishing them also a happy success in their laudable attempts to discover the true nature of the works of God, and praying that they, and other researchers into physical truths, may cordially refer their attainments to the glory of the great Author of nature, and to the comfort of mankind."

* The same thing is remarked of Sir Isaac Newton.

So brightly did the example of this great and good man shine through his whole course, that Bishop Burnet, on reviewing it, in a moment of pious exultation thus expressed himself: "I might challenge the whole tribe of libertines to come and view the usefulness as well as the excellence of the Christian religion, in a life that was entirely dedicated to it."

## JOHN LOCKE.

JOHN LOCKE was born in 1632, at Wington, near Bristol, England. He is usually esteemed as one of the most illustrious philosophers and one of the greatest men that England ever produced. We are told that, "with judicious taste and becoming simplicity, Queen Caroline erected in her pavilion at Richmond his bust, with those of Bacon, Newton, and Clarke,* as the four principal philosophers of which England may boast with real pride and satisfaction when she enumerates her departed heroes." It seems unnecessary to refer to his public life, as his name is so well known. His "Essay concerning Human Understanding," his "Discourses on Government," and

* Samuel Clarke, D. D., whose name was associated with Newton and Leibnitz while living. His clerical title excludes him from a notice in these sketches.

his "Letters on Toleration," are the works for which he is most unusually distinguished.

Locke was a practical man. He always kept the useful in his eye, and esteemed the employments of men only in proportion to the good they are capable of producing. This extended even to the pursuits of criticism and other departments of literature. This general trait of character is illustrated by the following anecdote:—

"Mr. Locke being invited by a certain nobleman to meet some of the most celebrated wits and scholars of the age, went in great expectation of enjoying a high intellectual repast. The card-table being introduced after dinner, contrary to his expectation, he retired pensive and chagrined to the window. Inquiry being made if he was well, he replied, 'he had come to give the company meeting in full confidence of receiving an uncommon degree of satisfaction in the conversation of such celebrated characters, and he must acknowledge he felt himself hurt at the disappointment.' The card-table was immediately withdrawn, and a rich flow of souls began, to his no small gratification."

His belief in the Christian religion, and his regard for its sacred truths, he exhibited in various ways. Among his earlier works is

found one entitled, "Reasonableness of Christianity," and in the latter part of his life he wrote a judicious commentary on several of the epistles of St. Paul. He everywhere refers to the sacred writings with the greatest reverence, and exhorts Christians "to betake themselves in earnest to the study of the way of salvation, in those holy writings, wherein God has revealed it from heaven and proposed it to the world, seeking our religion where we are sure it is in truth to be found, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." In answer to the question propounded to him, "What is the shortest and surest way for a young man to attain the true knowledge of the Christian religion?" he says, "Let him study the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament. Therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

The pious consolation which the Christian receives from a trust in God, and in the revelation which he has seen fit to give to man, it seems to me could not be more forcibly expressed in the same number of words, than in the following simple declaration of his: "I gratefully receive and rejoice in the light of revelation, which has set me at rest in many

things, the manner whereof my poor reason can by no means make out to me." Thus we see even sage and hoary-headed philosophy listening to the teaching of revelation, with the intent and ear of childhood to the voice of maternal instruction.

Lady Masham, a lady of superior intelligence and virtue, and in whose society this illustrious man passed the last years of his life, gives the following account of the manner in which he died:—

"You will not, perhaps, dislike to know, that the last scene of Mr. Locke's life was not less admirable than anything else concerning him. All the faculties of his mind were perfect to the last. His weakness, of which alone he died, made such gradual and visible advances, that few people, I think, do so sensibly see death approach them as he did. During all this time no one could observe the least alteration in his humour; always cheerful, conversable, civil, to the last day thoughtful of all the concerns of his friends and omitting no fit occasion of giving Christian advice to all about him. In short, his death was like his life—truly pious, yet natural, easy, and unaffected. Time, I think, can never produce a more eminent example of reason and religion than he was, both living and dying.

## JOSEPH ADDISON.

Joseph Addison was born May 1, 1672. He formed an acquaintance with Mr., afterwards Sir Richard Steele, in early life, with whom he was subsequently so intimately associated. At the age of fifteen he was entered at Queen's College, Oxford, where he soon became distinguished for the ardour with which he cultivated classical literature, and for his skill in Latin poetry. He early began to distinguish himself as an author, and was highly respected by many of the greatest and the most learned of his contemporaries.

In 1695 he addressed a complimentary poem, on one of the campaigns of King William, to the lord keeper Somers; and in 1701 he wrote his epistolary poem from Italy, addressed to Lord Halifax, which is esteemed by many the most elegant and finished of his poetical productions. On his return home, he published his travels, which he dedicated to Lord Somers. After some reverses attendant on the death of King William, Lord Godolphin applying to Lord Halifax to recommend him a poet capable of celebrating the recent splendid victory of the Duke of Marlborough at Blenheim, the latter named Mr. Addison, who pro-

duced his celebrated poem, "The Campaign," for which he was rewarded with the place of commissioner of appeals, in which he succeeded Mr. Locke. In the year 1706 he was made secretary of state. These employments, however, did not engross him from the pursuits of literature. He assisted Steele, in the *Tattler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*, in the course of which appeared the series of papers afterwards collected, and subsequently often reprinted, under the title of "Addison's Evidences of the Christian Religion." In his latter years he projected a paraphrastical version of the Psalms of David, of which he gave a beautiful specimen in his metrical translation of Psalm xxiii: "The Lord my pasture shall prepare," &c. But a long and painful illness prevented the completion of this pious design; and it is to be regretted, as the few compositions of this kind which he has left us exhibit proofs of his piety, and his competency for the undertaking.

Dr. Johnson, in delineating his character as a writer, gives the following amiable picture of him:—

"He employed wit on the side of virtue and religion. He not only made the proper use of wit himself, but taught it to others; and from his time it has been generally subservient to

the cause of reason and truth. He has dissipated the prejudice that had long connected cheerfulness with vice, and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character, above all Greek, above all Roman fame. As a teacher of wisdom, he may be confidently followed. His religion has nothing in it enthusiastic, or superstitious; he appears neither weakly, credulous, nor wantonly sceptical; his morality is neither dangerously lax, nor impracticably rigid. All the enchantments of fancy, and all the cogency of argument, are employed to recommend to the reader his real interest, the care of pleasing the Author of his being."

Mr. Addison, a man of most exquisite taste, was a great admirer of the Scriptures. "After perusing the book of Psalms," says he, "let a judge of the beauties of poetry read a literal translation of Horace or Pindar, and he will find in these two last such an absurdity and confusion of style, with such a comparative poverty of imagination, as will make him sensible of the vast superiority of Scripture style."

As he drew near to the close of life, he was sustained by the Christian's joys and by the

Christian's hopes. His future existence he contemplated with delight. In his earlier and more prosperous days, he had said in regard to the immortality of the soul:—"If it is a dream let me enjoy it; since it makes me both the happier and the better man." Now that this scene approaches nearer, he says: "The prospects of a future state is the secret comfort and refreshment of my soul. It is that which makes nature look cheerful about me; it doubles all my pleasures, and supports me under all my afflictions. I can look at disappointments and misfortunes, pain and sickness, death itself, with indifference, so long as I keep in view the pleasures of eternity, and the state of being in which there will be no fears nor apprehensions, pains nor sorrows."

Just before his departure, having sent for a young nobleman nearly related to him, who requested to know his dying commands,—his answer was:—"See in what peace a Christian can die."

## GENERAL REMARKS.

In looking over a biographical sketch of Sir Isaac Newton, I find the following brief remarks:—"How great and satisfactory a confirmation is it to the sincere, humble Christian, and what an unsurmountable barrier

does it present to the infidel, to perceive in the list of Christian believers, the exalted and venerable names of Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Addison, and Lyttleton!—men who must be acknowledged to be ornaments of human nature, when we consider the wide compass of their abilities, the great extent of their learning and knowledge, and the piety, integrity, and beneficence of their lives. These eminent characters firmly adhered to the belief of Christianity, after the most diligent and exact researches into the life of its Founder, the authenticity of its records, the completion of its prophecies, the sublimity of its doctrines, the purity of its precepts, and the arguments of its adversaries."

These *sketches* were first intended mainly for the young, who, whatever else they may have learned, may not have learned that the most eminent men of modern times have been the devoted advocates of Christianity. This the writer of these sketches did not early learn —his attention was not early directed to this subject. But here another direction is given to this subject. We are told, that Christian biography may serve as a confirmation of the faith even of "the sincere and humble *Christian.*" To thousands who are destined, in the order of Providence, to move in the lower

walks of life, and perhaps to see pride and vice triumphant, while virtue and unassuming worth pine in lonely and perhaps starving solitude,—to thousands of such, I say, the question must have presented itself,—"If Christianity is true, why are not those who take the lead in society its advocates?" Such questions, how natural: "Have any of the *rulers* or the *Pharisees* believed on him?" But not such is the language of the prophet:—"Therefore, I say surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them: for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God." But to such as propose this question, these sketches say:—"Those who take the lead in most of the lower circles of society are either those whom the world loves more because *the world loves its own*, and not because of the possession of any learning, talent, or real worth, —or who have devoted their conscience upon the altar of their ambition, and having *intellect* enough to learn the truth, still love darkness rather than light *because their deeds are evil.*" And these sketches further say to such inquirers:—"Look beyond the narrow circle of your own neighbourhood or town,—look

out upon those who have taken the lead in carrying on all the most important enterprises of the world, and whose names stand as beacon-lights along the path of science—shining brighter and brighter with the lapse of years; and when you contemplate such a one, there you will find *a Christian.*"

Let the young man, or even the old man, who has not had the means of pushing his inquiries among the speculative objections to Christianity, or among the speculative evidences by which it is supported, remember this, that no objection has ever been urged, which has not been reviewed and fully confuted by the researches of the wonderful men whose names have been presented in these sketches. To him who should say, there have been infidels and unbelievers, as well as Christians, of distinguished intellect, I need only answer: It requires neither research, moral candour, nor a virtuous life, to be an unbeliever or an infidel; for a thinking man to be a Christian, it requires them all. Newton used to check and silence the infidel, Dr. Halley, when he ventured to speak anything in his presence disrespectful to religion, by the remark: "*I have studied these things—you have not.*" If we add to this, that Newton, in order to be a Christian, had to combine with his re-

search, moral candour and a virtuous life—both of which are opposed to the natural heart, which is enmity against God,—to the honest inquirer after truth, his opinions of the Christian religion would outweigh those of an hundred dissolute philosophers, though eminent and honoured as was his friend Halley.

### Metaphysicians.

On recurring to the sketch of Mr. Locke, the inquiry naturally arises, whether he stands alone as a Christian among the distinguished metaphysicians?—and the question assumes a peculiar interest, when we learn that it is the express office of these men "to detect the errors of thinking, by going back to the fountains of thought; and to direct into the proper track of reasoning the devious mind of man, by showing him its whole process from the first perceptions of sense to the last conclusion of ratiocination;" and that it is from the principles laid down by these men, that all the practical rules for the conduct of the human judgment are drawn. Locke stands not alone.

## DESCARTES

Has been justly styled the father of modern philosophy, and has given it its name. Even Cousin says, the *Cartesian* method has become the only legitimate method of modern philosophy. He flourished about the beginning of the sixteenth century—an age of comparative moral darkness. His philosophy, however, was deeply imbued with theology. He taught, as among the elements of philosophic investigation, these fundamental truths, —that there is a God, that he is the author of nature, and that the soul is immaterial and immortal. While I have no evidence of his practical piety, I believe no part of his system has ever been charged with savouring of infidelity.

## THOMAS REID, D. D., F. R. S.,

Professor of moral philosophy in the University of Glasgow, was a metaphysician of great discrimination and of great merit. "His opinions of the most important subjects," says Mr. Stewart, who has given to the world an account of his life and writings, "are to be found in his works, and that spirit of piety

which animated every part of his conduct forms the best comment on their practical tendency."

## DUGALD STEWART,

A MAN of wonderful powers of mind, and of most singular excellence of character, was a Christian. At the age of nineteen, he was a teacher of mathematics in the University of Edinburgh. At the age of twenty-five, he superadded to the duties of his department, and that while delivering to his classes for the first time a course of lectures on astronomy, the temporary charge of the department of moral philosophy, which required of him a daily lecture of an hour in length, for five or six successive months. These lectures, though commenced with only four days' notice, and on a new and abstruse subject, and while he was in the full discharge of the arduous duties of the mathematical chair, were delivered with an eloquence and felicity of illustration rarely equalled in the lecture room. At the age of thirty-two, he succeeded Dr. Ferguson, as professor of moral philosophy. "So extensive," says a biographer, "was his acquaintance with almost every department of literature, and so readily did he arrange

his ideas on any subject, with a view to their communication to others, that his colleagues frequently, in the event of illness or absence, availed themselves of his assistance in the instruction of their classes. In addition to his own academical duties, he repeatedly supplied the place of Dr. John Robinson, professor of natural philosophy. He taught, for several months during one winter, the Greek classes for the late Mr. Dalzel; he more than one season taught the mathematical classes for the late Mr. Playfair; he delivered some lectures on logic during an illness of Dr. Finlayson; and he, one winter, lectured for some time on belles lettres for the successor of Dr. Blair. A man of such learning and of such powers could not fail to exert a great influence; but this influence was all thrown into the scale of Christianity. His writings are among the standard works of metaphysical science. He died 1828, aged seventy-four years.

## THOMAS BROWN, M.D.,

AUTHOR of the "Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind," distinguished as an analytical philosopher, was a Christian. I find the following short notice of him in the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge:—

"Dr. Thomas Brown, a man eminent as a metaphysician, moral philosopher, and poet, was born at Kirkmabreck, in Scotland, in 1777, and displayed an early acuteness and thirst for knowledge. His first education was received in the vicinity of London, and was completed at the University of Edinburgh. At the age of twenty, he wrote a masterly answer to Darwin's Zoonomia. In 1810 he succeeded Mr. Stewart at Edinburgh, as professor of moral philosophy, and soon gained universal admiration as a lecturer, by his eloquence and talents, and affection by his kindness to the students. Dr. Brown was a professed believer in Christianity; and though he too seldom adverts to the Bible in his philosophical lectures, yet his system of metaphysics and morals approaches nearer to the simplicity and purity of the sacred volume, than that of many professed expounders of it. He has thrown more light on the essential dis-

tinction between the mind and the body, and on the mental emotions and associations, than perhaps any preceding writer. His brilliant career was unfortunately cut short by consumption, on the 2d of April, 1820."

## SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE,

DISTINGUISHED as a metaphysician, not less than as a poet, was a Christian. Witness his "Friend," "Aids to Reflection," and "Statesman's Manual," works which display genius of the highest order devoted to the service of Christianity.

But these afford not the evidence of his Christian character. In the closing scenes of his life were exhibited the true spirit of a philosopher, and the hopes and triumphs of a Christian. His worldly affairs had been long settled, and after many tender adieus, he expressed a wish that he might be as little interrupted as possible. His sufferings were severe and constant till within thirty-six hours of his end; but they had no power to affect the deep tranquillity of his mind or the wonted sweetness of his address. His prayer from the beginning was, that God would not withdraw his Spirit; and that by the way in which he should bear the last struggle, he might be

able to evince the sincerity of his faith in Christ." His prayer was answered, and "he sleeps in Jesus."

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In the three preceding articles I have presented some of the most distinguished names connected with the history of a particular science; and we have seen that they were Christians. I know not a useful science, the results of the investigation of which would not be the same. Yet that system of arranging the subjects of these sketches is not perhaps the best to follow. At any rate, we turn aside from this course for a short time to examine a small group which constituted a brilliant constellation in the literary heavens of Europe near the close of the last century.

## JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Was born July 16, 1723, at Plympton, Devonshire, England. He had very early a strong partiality for drawing and painting, and after being graduated at Oxford was placed under the care of the artist Hudson. About 1749 he travelled into Italy, where he improved himself in the Italian school of arts, and chastened

his taste by the study of the best productions of Roman genius. His fame as a portrait and historical painter is well known. When the Royal Academy was instituted, in 1768, he was unanimously chosen president, and was knighted. In 1783 he was appointed principal painter to the king.

Sir Joshua was not less distinguished as a literary character. He was the active promoter of a literary association which was formed in 1764, and which numbered among its illustrious members the names of Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Douglas, Goldsmith, the Whartons, &c. His literary works, the principal of which are the masterly discourses delivered to the Academy, form three volumes. In these discourses he displayed not only great taste and a perfect acquaintance with his profession, but strong powers of language, sound judgment, an elegant style, and luminous order. His merits did not pass unrewarded. He was created doctor of laws by the universities of Dublin and Oxford, and was honoured with the friendships of the greatest men of the age, at home and abroad. He resigned the chair of president of the Royal Academy, and died 23d Feb., 1792, aged sixty-nine. His remains were deposited in St. Paul's Cathedral, and while his obsequies were graced

with the attendance of men of rank, of genius, and learning, the shops through the streets were shut up, so that the funeral of a private man engaged the attention of the public, and for a while suspended the busy concerns of the first commercial city in the world.

Sir Joshua was a Christian, and his last illness was cheered by the spirit of resignation and immortal hope.

## SAMUEL JOHNSON

Was born at Lichfield in Staffordshire, England, on the 7th of September, 1709, of obscure parents, his father being a small bookseller, and being destitute of the means for educating his son. Under the patronage of a gentleman by the name of Corbet he was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford, in 1728, being then in his nineteenth year. His pecuniary resources being cut off, he left Oxford, after a residence of three years, without taking a degree. He soon commenced writing for the public, and among his earlier prose productions are the lives of many distinguished men; and Boswell refers to him as one "who excelled all mankind in writing the lives of others." In 1747, he published the plan of his great English Dictionary, and the work itself appeared

in 1755. Meantime the Rambler, a semi-weekly periodical, written wholly by himself, and extending through two years, had been published. This consisted of a series of moral and religious essays.

By this time Johnson had acquired a great reputation, and the foundation of his future fame was firmly established. In 1755, he received the degree of A. M. from the University of Oxford; in 1762, as a mark of his great literary distinction, there was granted him a pension from the government of £300 per annum, and in 1765 he received the degree of LL. D. from Trinity College, Dublin. The same honour was subsequently, in 1775, conferred by the University of Oxford. A list of his prose works, as given by Mr. Boswell, fills more than five pages 8vo.

In regard to his religious character it may be premised that he was early devoted to God by his parents, being baptized on the day of his birth. Of his religious experience he gives the following account:—

"I fell into an inattention to religion or an indifference about it in my ninth year. The church at Lichfield, in which we had a seat, wanted reparation, so I was to go and find a seat in other churches; and having bad eyes and being awakened about this, I used to go

and read in the fields on Sunday. This habit continued till my fourteenth year, when I became a sort of lax *talker* against religion, for I did not much *think* against it. And this lasted till I went to Oxford, where it would not be *suffered*. When at Oxford I took up 'Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life,' expecting to find it a dull book, (as such books generally are,) and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found Law quite an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion after I became capable of rational inquiry."

"From this time," says his biographer, "religion was the predominant object of his thoughts, though, with the just sentiments of a conscientious Christian, he lamented that his practice of its duties fell far short of what it ought to be."

To "Law's Serious Call" he always alluded with great respect, and even pronounced it "the finest piece of hortatory theology in any language." It may not be amiss in passing to notice, that this book has called forth no common praise even from the sceptical Gibbon. "Mr. Law's master-work, the '*Serious Call*,'" says he, "is still read as a popular and powerful book of devotion. His precepts are rigid, but they are founded on the gospel; his satire is

sharp, but it is drawn from the knowledge of human life; and many of his portraits are not unworthy of the pen of La Bruyere. If he finds a spark of piety in his reader's mind, he will soon kindle it to a flame; and a philosopher must allow, that he exposes, with equal severity and truth, the strange contradiction between the faith and practice of the Christian world."

The remark of Dr. Johnson's biographer, that from the time of his conversion at Oxford, *religion was the predominant object of his thoughts*, might be illustrated by numerous quotations from his writings. The following is found in his diary, on his twenty-seventh birth-day:—"Sept. 7, 1736. I have this day entered upon my twenty-eighth year. Mayest thou, O God, enable me, for Jesus Christ's sake, to spend this in such a manner that I may receive comfort from it at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment! Amen." And on entering upon the publication of his Rambler, before referred to, he composed and offered up the following prayer, such were the devout and conscientious sentiments with which this paper was undertaken: "Almighty God, the giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly, grant, I beseech thee, that

in this undertaking thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the salvation of myself and others; grant this, O Lord, for the sake of thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen." Among his writings are some professedly religious. One work is entitled "On Vicarious Punishments, and the Great Propitiation for the sins of the world by Jesus Christ." Another consists entirely of "Prayers and Meditations."

Dr. Johnson inherited a strong predisposition to morbid melancholy, which exhibited itself during his whole life, among other ways, in a great and unconquerable dread of death. He once said, "I never had a moment in which death was not terrible to me. When, however, this great man actually approached dissolution "all his fears were calmed and absolved by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ." He was full of resignation, strong in faith, joyful in hope of his own salvation, and anxious for the salvation of his friends. "God bless you, my dear,"—addressed to a young lady, the daughter of a particular friend—were the last words he was heard to speak.

## EDMUND BURKE.

Of the general character of the subject of this sketch, whose name fills so large a space both in the political and literary annals of Great Britain, little need be said. He was born at Dublin, Jan. 1, 1730, and died July 8, 1797. In his political career, he was a member of parliament, pay-master general, and a member of the council. He made a strenuous and eloquent resistance to the impolitic contest with America; and his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, published in 1790, exhibited his foresight of the result, and his hostility to the doctrines of that infatuated nation. His compositions have been collected in sixteen volumes 8vo.

The following tribute is from the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge:—

"In private life Burke was amiable and benevolent; in public, indefatigable, ardent, and abhorrent of meanness and injustice. It was this latter quality which rendered him a persevering advocate of the Irish Catholics. As an orator, he ranks among the first of modern times; and as a writer, whether we consider the splendour of his diction, the richness and variety of his imagery, or the boundless stores

of knowledge which he displays, it must be acknowledged that there are few who equal and none who transcend him. Burke was a sincere believer in Christianity, and his noble mind was moulded and elevated by its pure and generous sentiments. Unlike some of his greatest contemporaries, he made neither the bottle nor the dice his household deities; he had no taste for pursuits that kill time rather than pass it—'I have no time,' said he, 'to be idle.' His fame is spotless. Although in the judgment of the world he was the greatest statesman and orator of his own and perhaps of any age, his humility was even more rare and remarkable than his genius. He declined the honour of an interment in the great national receptacle of illustrious men, Westminster Abbey, and even forbade it in his will, assigning as his reason, "I have had in my life but too much of noise and compliment.' To the approach of death he submitted with a calm and Christian resignation, undisturbed by a murmur, hoping, as he said, to obtain the divine mercy through the intercession of a blessed Redeemer, which (in his own words) 'he had long sought with unfeigned humiliation, and to which he looked with a trembling hope.' The first clause in his will marks, in a manner equally striking, his deliberate views

and deepest feelings on this great subject, and is a sort of testamentary witness to the world of the truth and value of the gospel of Christ. 'According to the ancient, good, and laudable custom, of which my heart and understanding recognise the propriety, I bequeath my soul to God, hoping for his mercy only through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. My body I desire to be buried in the church at Beaconsfield, near the bodies of my dearest brother and my dearest son, in all humility praying, that as we have lived in perfect unity together, we may together have a part in the resurrection of the just.'

"There never was a more beautiful alliance between virtue and talents. All his conceptions were grand, all his sentiments generous. The great leading trait of his character, and that which gave it all its energy and its colour, was that strong hatred of vice which is no other than the passionate love of virtue. It breathes in all his writings; it was the guide of all his actions. But even the force of his eloquence was insufficient to transfuse it into the weaker or perverted minds of his contemporaries. Mr. Burke was too superior to the age in which he lived."

## JAMES NECKER.

THIS great statesman lived in the same age with Edmund Burke, the subject of my last sketch; and though his fortune was cast in infidel France, he has been compared, for the purity of his principles and the integrity of his character, with that great English statesman. The following sketch is from the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge:—

"James Necker, an eminent financier and religious statesman, the father of Madame de Stael, was born in 1732, at Geneva, and for many years carried on the business of a banker at Paris. His eulogy on Colbert, his treatise on the Corn laws and Trade, and some essays on the Resources of France, inspired such an idea of his talents for finance, that in 1776 he was appointed director of the treasury, and shortly after controller-general. Before his resignation, in 1781, he published a statement of his operations, addressed to the king; and, while in retirement, he produced a work on the Administration of the Finances, and another on the Importance of Religious Opinions. The latter work, notwithstanding some imperfections, is worthy of immortality. It has been translated into

English. He was re-installed in the controllership in 1788, and advised the convocation of the states general; was abruptly dismissed, and ordered to quit the kingdom, in July, 1789, but was almost instantly recalled, on account of the ferment which his departure excited in the public mind. Necker, however, soon became as much an object of antipathy to the fickle people as he had been of their idolatry, and in 1790 he left France forever. M. Necker was a decided Protestant, and worthy of better treatment than papal and infidel France was disposed to give him. In 1798, he published a work of much interest on the French Revolution; and in 1800, his last great and eloquent work on the Religious View of Morality, in three volumes. Necker and Burke belong to the same class of men. He died at Copet, in Switzerland, in 1804. The whole of his works form fifteen volumes."

## CHAPTER VI.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY—EDMUND SPENSER—SIR PHILIP SIDNEY—JOHN MILTON—JOHN DENHAM—WENTWORTH DILLON—JOHN, EARL OF ROCHESTER—ABRAHAM COWLEY—EDMUND WALLER—JOHN PHILLIPS—MATTHEW PRIOR—NICHOLAS ROWE—ALEXANDER POPE—JAMES THOMSON—WILLIAM COLLINS—WILLIAM COWPER—JAMES BEATTIE—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH—WALTER SCOTT—EDMUND SMITH—WILLIAM KING—CHARLES MONTAGUE, EARL OF HALIFAX—JOHN HUGHES—SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE—ELIJAH FENTON—NICHOLAS BOILEAU—FENELON.

### Poets.

It has been said, "the sweetest poets that have ever sung have been Christians." And is it so? I doubt not but some have heard so much of Byron and Shelley, (almost the only infidel English poets whose names are on record,) as to come to the conclusion, that all the master poets of the world have been sceptics and unbelievers. I propose to present the reader with sketches of some of the Christian poets; but first I am disposed to present a short notice of one of these sons of song, admired by the atheist and the freethinker—a notice too which will present a scene in which the *other* also acts a part. We sometimes get a stronger view of truth, or of moral beauty, by contrast.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Was the eldest son of Sir Timothy Shelley, of Sussex, England. At the age of thirteen, he was sent to Eaton, and at sixteen, to the University of Oxford, where he soon distinguished himself by the publication of a pamphlet entitled, "The necessity of Atheism;" for which he was expelled from the university. He soon left his father's house for London, where he eloped with a lady younger than himself, with whom he took up his residence in Edinburgh for a time, and afterwards passed over to Ireland. On forming this connexion, his father broke off all communication with his son; and after the birth of two children, the young couple separated, as is said, "by mutual consent," upon which Mrs. Shelley committed suicide.

Shelley then married again; after which his atheism and irreligion became so notorious, that his children were taken from him by a decree of the lord chancellor. He soon quit England for Switzerland, where he formed an intimate acquaintance with Byron, after he too had changed his native land, and had become a wanderer from his friends, as well as from all the restraints of virtue. But their

friendship was broken by the early death of Shelley. And how did he die? "He returned from Pisa to Leghorn, for the purpose of taking a sea excursion—an amusement to which he was much attached. During a violent storm the boat was swamped, and the party on board were all drowned." After reading this, which is all the information I have on the subject, I feel assured, that the thoughtful reader will pause, and still inquire with himself,—*How did he die?*

Of what became of his body, we have a more full account. A party, of whom Byron was one, afterwards found his body partly decomposed on the shore. They determined to burn the remains; and, as if in contempt of Christianity, they combined with this heathen ceremony whatever of heathen rites could, in their estimation, dignify the scene; and thus poured upon the burning body what they called "*frankincense* and wine." The burning over, and the ashes gathered up, they dined, they drank to intoxication, and as they returned to Leghorn, the quiet stillness of the Italian night was broken by the shouts of their drunken midnight revelry. But lest I should be thought to exaggerate, I will give you the whole from *Galt's Life of Byron*:—

"Mr. Shelley's body was found near Via

Riggio, and, being greatly decomposed, and unfit to be removed, it was determined to reduce the remains to ashes, that they might be carried to a place of sepulture. Accordingly preparations were made for the burning. Wood in abundance was found on the shore, consisting of old trees and the wreck of vessels: the spot itself was well suited for the ceremony. The magnificent bay of Spezia was on the right, and Leghorn on the left, at equal distances of about two-and-twenty miles. The headlands project boldly far into the sea; in front lie several islands, and behind dark forests and the cliffy Apennines. Nothing was omitted that could exalt and dignify the mournful rites with the associations of classic antiquity—frankincense and wine were not forgotten. The weather was serene and beautiful, and the pacified ocean was silent, as the flame rose with extraordinary brightness. Lord Byron was present; but he should himself have described the scene, and what he felt.

"These antique obsequies were undoubtedly affecting; but the return of the mourners from the burning is the most appalling orgia, without the honour of crime, of which I have ever heard. When the duty was done, and the ashes collected, they dined and drank.

much together, and bursting from the calm mastery with which they had repressed their feelings during the solemnity, gave way to frantic exultation. They were all drunk; they sung, they shouted, and their barouche was driven like a whirlwind through the forest. I can conceive nothing descriptive of the demoniac revelry of that flight, but scraps of the dead man's own song of Faust, Mephistophiles, and Ignis Fatuus, in alternate chorus."

Being a man myself, I would fain have kept back this horrid picture of human depravity. But I wished to present a sketch from nature, of the weakness of human philosophy, and to show by facts how despicable and mean is man at his best estate, when he has broken away from the restraints of religion. Long as this sketch is, I am willing the sceptic should cull from it any flower he can find, to twine about the brow of an infidel philosophy!

One of the limitations which I prescribed to myself when I undertook to furnish these sketches, should be borne in mind, which is, that no *clergymen* are to be noticed. I am aware that this excludes from the catalogue

of high names which I am presenting, some who best deserve a place in it. What department of literature or of science has not been advanced by clergymen? What station of honour has not been nobly filled—what place of active benevolence has not been usefully occupied by clergymen? Among the *poets*, Blair, who wrote "*The Grave*," and Watts, and Young, and the Wesleys, and Heber, and White—and how many more I know not, were clergymen.

White's poetic talents called forth a noble tribute even from Byron himself. But we pass them by; their poetry is associated with the best feelings of our nature, and their names need no record, but in our hearts.

Many of the poets too have been distinguished in other departments of literature, or have filled stations of honour in their day; so that their names have been already called up by other associations. Addison, and Lyttleton, and West, and Coleridge—all distinguished as *poets*—have already been noticed in these sketches. And the *living poets* also—how few of them are not devoted to the cause of morality and virtue! But here, too, we find another limit set to our work. We have confined ourselves to sketching the dead and not the living. To our work then.

## EDMUND SPENSER.

SPENSER was one of England's four most eminent poets. The others are Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Milton. *Chaucer*, who has been called "the daystar and the father of English poetry," has left the record of his attachment to Christianity, in the exile and imprisonment he suffered for his adherence to the doctrines of Wiclif. The defects in *Shakspeare's* character, are read in the blemishes which everywhere mar the beauty of his noble productions. And of *Milton* we shall speak hereafter.

"Our celebrated *Spenser*," says Simpson, "though a man of dissipation in his youth, in his more advanced years entered into the interior of religion, and in the two hymns on "*Heavenly Love* and *Heavenly Beauty*," has expressed all the height and depth of Christian experience:—

"Then shalt thou feel thy spirit so possest,
And ravish'd with devouring great desire
Of his dear self, that shall thy feeble breast
Inflame with love, and set thee all on fire
With burning zeal, through every part entire,
That in no earthly thing thou shalt delight,
But in his sweet and amiable sight.

Then shall thy ravish'd soul inspired be
With heavenly thoughts, far above human skill,
And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainly see
The idea of his pure glory present still
Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill
With sweet enragement of celestial love,
Kindled through sight of those fair things above."

"Spenser's religion, we see from the above extracts, is a religion of feeling. This too is unquestionably the religion of the Bible. 'Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'"

He died in 1598, and was interred in Westminster Abbey, near Chancey.

## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Was a friend and patron of Spenser. He was also a poet of great power of thought and description; and is described by the writers of that age as the most perfect model of an accomplished gentleman that could be formed even in imagination. He possessed fine talents, was well educated, and at the age of twenty-one was sent by Queen Elizabeth, as her ambassador, to the Emperor of Germany.

When dying of a wound received at the battle of Zutphen, he took leave of his brother in

these words: "Love my memory; cherish my friends; but above all, govern your will and affections by the will and affections of your Creator. In me behold the end of this world, with all her vanity."

What attention he had paid to religion during his life, I know not; it seems that at life's close, he became serious and thoughtful. May the gay or careless reader become thoughtful, before that dark hour shall come upon him!

## JOHN MILTON

Was born in London, 1608, and is perhaps the most renowned of English poets. His chief production is the *Paradise Lost;* and of this immortal work Dr. Johnson has said: "Here is a full display of the united force of study and genius; of a great accumulation of materials with judgment to digest, and fancy to combine them. Milton was able to select from nature or from story, from ancient fable or from modern science, whatever could illustrate or adorn his thoughts,—an accumulation of knowledge, impregnated by mind, fermented by study, and sublimed by imagination." He adds: "Milton seems to have been well acquainted with his own genius, and to

know what it was that nature had bestowed on him—more than on others—the power of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful. The characteristic quality of his poem is sublimity. He sometimes descends to the elegant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace, but his natural post is gigantic loftiness. He can please when pleasure is required; but it is his peculiar power to astonish."

Addison says:—

"Whate'er his pen describes I more than see,
Whilst every verse, array'd in majesty,
Bold and sublime, my whole attention draws,
And seems above the critic's nicer laws.
How are you struck with terror and delight,
When angel with archangel copes in fight!
When great Messiah's outspread banner shines,
How does the chariot rattle in his lines!
What sound of brazen wheels, what thunders, scare
And stun the reader with the din of war!
With fear my spirits and my blood retire,
To see the seraphs sunk in clouds of fire;
But when, with eager steps, from hence I rise,
And view the first gay scenes of *Paradise*,
What tongue, what words of rapture can express
A vision so profuse of pleasantness?"

Milton had a full conviction of the truth of Christianity; and most of his writings are of a religious character. And, indeed, the spirit

with which he undertook the *Paradise Lost*, may be seen in the following remarks. After promising to undertake something—he yet knows not what—that may be of use and honour to his country, he says: "This is not to be obtained but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added, industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed, I refuse not to sustain this expectation."

Milton regarded the Holy Scriptures with the most profound veneration. He says: "There are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets, and no politics like to those which the Scriptures teach."

It was with the sublime character of such men as Milton in view, that Cowper penned these lines:—

"Piety has found
Friends in the friends of science, and true prayer
Has flow'd from lips wet with *Castalian* dews.
Such was thy wisdom, *Newton*, child-like sage!
Sagacious reader of the *works* of God,
And in his *word* sagacious. Such, too, thine,

*Milton*, whose genius had angelic wings,
And fed on manna. And such thine, in whom
Our British Themis gloried with just cause,
Immortal *Hale!* for deep discernment praised,
And sound integrity, not more than form'd
For sanctity of manners undefiled."

## SIR JOHN DENHAM,

Says Johnson, "is deservedly considered one of the fathers of English poetry." The same writer has said: "He appears, whenever any serious question comes before him, to have been a man of piety. He consecrated his poetical powers to religion, and made a metrical version of the Psalms of David." His poetical fame rests chiefly on his *Cooper's Hill.*

## WENTWORTH DILLON,

Earl of Roscommon, acquired his poetic fame mainly by his translations; but these possessed such uncommon excellence, as to call forth from Addison this deserved compliment:—

"Nor must Roscommon pass neglected by,
That makes even rules a noble poetry—
Rules whose deep sense and heavenly numbers show
The best of critics, and of poets too."

Indeed, he is perhaps the only correct writer of verse before Addison's time; and Pope has

celebrated him as the only moral writer of King Charles's reign:—

> "Unhappy Dryden! in all Charles's days
> Roscommon only boasts unspotted lays."

These poets both lived in a licentious and a trifling age—the age of Buckingham. Though believers, their piety was not strongly marked. The latter of these noblemen especially did not die as a *pious* man ought to die. At the moment in which he expired, he uttered, with an energy of voice that expressed the most fervent devotion, two lines of his own version of "Dies Irae:"—

> "My God, my Father, and my Friend,
> Do not forsake me in my end."

He died in 1684, and was buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey. But what mockery is the pomp of a burial, compared with the triumph which often marks the Christian's dying hour! I would rather have my bones thrown out, with those of Wiclif, upon a dung-hill, than have the world in doubt whether I were to have a part in the first resurrection.

## JOHN, EARL OF ROCHESTER.

JOHN WILMOT, afterwards Earl of Rochester, was born April 10, 1647, in Oxfordshire, England. After a grammatical education at the school of Burford, he entered a nobleman into Wadham College, in 1659, at twelve years of age; and in 1661, at fourteen, was, with some other persons of high rank, made master of arts, by Lord Clarendon, in person.

His poetical fame has given him a place in Johnson's "Lives of the English Poets," and Hazlitt, in his critical list of British Poets, commends his wit, when he remarks, that "his verses cut and sparkle like diamonds."

Rochester flourished in the reign of King Charles, with whom he was a great favourite. This was a corrupt and licentious period in English history, and Dr. Johnson has well depicted its influence on this accomplished young nobleman.

"He had very early an inclination to intemperance, which he totally subdued in his travels; but, when he became a courtier, he unhappily addicted himself to dissolute and vicious company, by which his principles were corrupted, and his manners depraved. He lost all sense of religious restraint, and, find-

ing it not convenient to admit the authority of laws which he was resolved not to obey, sheltered his wickedness behind infidelity. As he excelled in that noisy and licentious merriment which wine excites, his companions eagerly encouraged him in excess, and he willingly indulged it, till, as he confessed to Dr. Burnet, he was for five years together continually drunk, or so much inflamed by frequent ebriety, as in no interval to be master of himself. Thus, in a course of drunken gayety and gross sensuality, with intervals of study perhaps yet more criminal, with an avowed contempt of all decency and order, a total disregard of every moral, and a resolute denial of every religious obligation, he lived worthless and useless, and blazed out his youth and his health in lavish voluptuousness, till, at the age of one-and-thirty, he had exhausted the fund of life, and reduced himself to a state of weakness and decay."

So much for his course of sin. But I cannot avoid delaying here long enough to inquire what would be gained to the cause of infidelity, if, instead of being able to record his reformation, and thus to set him down as a Christian, he had persevered in his atheism and his drunkenness, and thus added to a life of vice and of wretchedness, a death of

horror and of woes? Yet this is the only difference between the case under consideration, and that of most of those who *die*, as well as *live*, in unbelief.

At this time he became acquainted with Bishop Burnet, through whose instrumentality he was reclaimed from his errors, became a believer in the truths of Christianity, and submitted to be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. After it had pleased God to fill his mind with peace and joy in believing, he would say: "O blessed God, can such a horrid creature as I am be accepted by thee, who have denied thy being, and contemned thy power? Can there be mercy and pardon for me? Will God own such a wretch as I am?" And during a fit of sickness that ensued, he said: "Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me? O mighty Saviour, never but through thine infinite love and satisfaction! O never, but by the purchase of thy blood!" Adding, "That with all abhorrence he reflected upon his former life, that from his heart he repented of all that folly and madness of which he had been guilty."

One of his companions coming to see him on his death-bed, he said to him: "O remember that you contemn God no more. He is an avenging God, and will visit you for your sins;

and will, I hope, in mercy touch your conscience, sooner or later, as he has done mine. You and I have been friends and sinners together a great while, therefore I am the more free with you. We have been all mistaken in our conceits and opinions; our persuasions have been false and groundless; therefore I pray God grant you repentance."

When he drew towards the last stage of sickness, he said: "If God should spare me yet a little longer time here, I hope to bring glory to his name, proportionable to the dishonour I have done to him in my whole past life, and particularly by my endeavours to convince others, and to assure them of the danger of their condition, if they continue impenitent, and to tell them how graciously God hath dealt with me."

And when he came within still nearer views of dissolution, about three or four days before it, he said: "I shall now die; but O! what unspeakable glories do I see! What joys, beyond thought or expression, am I sensible of! I am assured of God's mercy to me, through Jesus Christ! O, how I long to die, and to be with my Saviour!"

For the admonition of others, and to undo, as much as was in his power, the mischief of his former conduct, he subscribed the follow-

ing *recantation*, and ordered it to be published after his death:—

"For the benefit of all those whom I may have drawn into sin, by my example and encouragement, I leave to the world this my last declaration, which I deliver in the presence of the great God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom I am now appearing to be judged: that from the bottom of my soul I detest and abhor the whole course of my former wicked life; that I think I can never sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who has given me a true sense of my pernicious opinions and vile practices, by which I have hitherto lived without hope and without God in the world, have been an open enemy to Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite to the Holy Spirit of grace; and that the greatest testimony of my charity to such is to warn them in the name of God, as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his being or his providence, or despise his goodness; no more to make a mock of sin, or contemn the pure and excellent religion of my ever-blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I, one of the greatest of sinners, do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness. Amen."

Thus died, in the thirty-third year of his age, the celebrated Earl of Rochester.

## ABRAHAM COWLEY

Was born in the city of London, in 1618. Hazlitt says, "Cowley is a writer of great sense, ingenuity, and learning." Felton says, that "Cowley was beloved by every muse that he courted; and that he has rivalled the ancients in every kind of poetry but tragedy." And Johnson says: "It may be affirmed, without any encomiastic fervour, that he brought to his poetic labours a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gayety of the less; that he was equally qualified for sprightly sallies, and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that if he left versification yet improvable, he left likewise from time to time such specimens of excellence as enabled succeeding poets to improve it." Sprat, his biographer, says: "In his Latin poems he has expressed to admiration all the numbers of verses and figures of poetry that are scattered up and down among the ancients. There is

hardly to be found in them all any good fashion of speech, or colour of measure, but he has comprehended it and given instances of it, according as his several arguments required either a majestic spirit, or a passionate, or a pleasant. This is the more extraordinary in that it was never yet performed by any single poet of the ancient Romans themselves." Addison, and a host of others, have bestowed on his productions similar praise.

Among his writings is a "Sacred Poem of the Troubles of David, in four books," which, had he lived, he intended to have extended to twelve books, thus forming a complete *epic*. And we have his opinion of the Bible, where he says, "All the books of the Bible are either already most admirable and exalted pieces of poetry, or are the best materials in the world for it."

Some seven or eight years before his death, "at a time," says his biographer, "when, if any ambitious or covetous thoughts had remained in his mind, he might justly have expected to have them readily satisfied, he gave over all pursuit of honour and riches, and went into retirement. During this recess his mind was rather exercised on what was to come, than what was past; he suffered no more business nor cares of life to come near him, than what

were enough to keep his soul awake, but not to disturb it. Some few friends and books, a cheerful heart and innocent conscience, were his constant companions. His poetry, indeed, he took with him, but he made that an anchorite, as well as himself; he only dedicated it to the service of his Maker, to describe the great images of religion and virtue, wherewith his mind abounded."

"His body was attended to Westminster Abbey by a great number of persons of the most eminent quality, and followed with the praises of all good and learned men. It lies near the ashes of Chaucer and Spenser, the two most famous English poets of former times. But whoever would do him right, should not only equal him to the principal ancient writers of our own nation, but should also rank his name among the authors of true antiquity, the best of the Greeks and Romans. The king was pleased to bestow on him the best epitaph, when, upon the news of his death, his Majesty declared, that *Mr. Cowley had not left a better man behind him in England.*"

## EDMUND WALLER

Was born in 1665, was educated at Cambridge, and was chosen, when scarce seventeen years of age, member of parliament—the last parliament of James I.; and such was the versatility of his talents, that he was a favourite with Cromwell, with the second Charles, and with James II. Thus he was constantly in public life, and was much admired, though he had some weak points in his character.

"As a poet," says Lempriere, "Waller is entitled to the highest praise. He may be called, as has been observed, the parent of English verse, and the first who showed us that our language had beauty and numbers. The English tongue came into his hands like a rough diamond; he polished it first, and to that degree, that all succeeding artists have admired the workmanship, without pretending to mend it." And Addison, in his "Account of the greatest English Poets," makes the transition from Milton to Waller in the following lines:—

"But now, my muse, a softer strain rehearse,
Turn every line with art, and smooth thy verse;
The courtly *Waller* next commands thy lays:
Muse, tune thy verse, with art, to *Waller's* praise."

It is related of him, that being once present, when the Duke of Buckingham was talking profanely before King Charles, he said to him, "My Lord, I am a great deal older than your Grace, and have, I believe, heard more arguments for atheism than ever your Grace did; but I have lived long enough to see there is nothing in them, and so I hope your Grace will."

Dr. Johnson bears the following testimony to his piety:—"Having now attained an age beyond which the laws of nature seldom suffer life to be extended, otherwise than by a future state, he seems to have turned his mind upon preparation for the decisive hour, and therefore consecrated his poetry to devotion. It is pleasing to discover that his piety was without weakness; that his intellectual powers continued vigorous; and that the lines which he composed, when '*he, for age, could neither read nor write,*' are not inferior to the effusions of his youth. As the disease (dropsy) increased upon him, he composed himself for his departure; and calling upon Dr. Birch to give him the holy sacrament, he desired his children to take it with him, and made an earnest declaration of his faith in Christianity."

### JOHN PHILLIPS

Was born in 1676, and is honourably noticed as a poet by Johnson, Hazlitt, and others; and he has a monument in Westminster Abbey.

"Phillips," says Johnson, "has been always praised, without contradiction, as a man modest, blameless, and *pious;* who bore narrowness of fortune without discontent, and tedious and painful maladies without impatience; beloved by those who knew him, but not ambitious to be known."

### MATTHEW PRIOR

Was born in 1664, had some eminence as a poet, and was also buried in Westminster Abbey. I have no evidence of his *piety.* Dr. Johnson says: "His opinions, so far as the means of judging are left us, seem to have been correct." His good taste, at least, is exhibited, in the remark, that "the writings of Solomon afford subjects for finer poems in every kind, than have yet appeared in the Greek, Latin, or any modern language."

## NICHOLAS ROWE,

Poet laureate of England, in the days of Addison, "after having read most of the Greek and Roman histories in their original languages, and most that are written in English, French, Italian, and Spanish, was fully persuaded of the truth of revealed religion, expressed it upon all occasions, took great delight in divinity and ecclesiastical history, and died at last like a Christian and philosopher, with an absolute resignation to the will of God."

## ALEXANDER POPE.

Of Pope various sentiments are entertained. The probability is, that his religious opinions, so far as relates to the great doctrines of Christianity, were about as correct as those of most persons who are not pious.

Johnson says of him: "The religion in which he lived and died was that of the Church of Rome, to which, in his correspondence with Racine, he professes himself a sincere adherent. That he was not scrupulously pious in some part of his life, is known by many idle and indecent applications of sen-

tences taken from the Scriptures—a mode of merriment which a good man dreads for its profaneness, and a witty man disdains for its easiness and vulgarity. But into whatever levities he has been betrayed, it does not appear that his principles were ever corrupted, or that he ever lost his belief in revelation." Ruffhead says: "Though a Catholic, as is supposed, to the day of his death, Pope was convinced that the Church of Rome had all the marks of that antichristian power predicted in the writings of the New Testament. And though he had not courage enough to profess himself a Protestant, he was firmly persuaded of the truths of Christianity." It is known that, in the latter part of his life, he attended the services of the English Church.

The estimation in which, as a writer and man of taste, he held the Bible, is expressed by himself in the following language:—"The pure and noble, the graceful and dignified simplicity of language, is nowhere in such perfection as in Scripture and Homer; and the whole Book of Job, with regard both to sublimity of thought and morality, exceeds beyond all comparison, the most noble parts of Homer."

## JAMES THOMSON,

AUTHOR of "The Seasons," has been styled by a critic, "the best and most original of our descriptive poets." He has a monument in Westminster Abbey; but in his *Seasons* he has a more imperishable monument to his memory.

He was trained for the ministry; but after studying divinity for a time, he laid it aside for the cultivation of the muses. A biographical sketch now before me, says: "Thomson in private life was an amiable, *pious*, and benevolent character, with great goodness of heart, and the most virtuous disposition;" and Simpson, in his *Plea for Religion*, enumerates him among the *believers*.

Lord Lyttleton, who, it will be recollected, was himself a poet and a Christian, pays him the noble compliment,—that his works contained

"No line which, dying, he could wish to blot."

## WILLIAM COLLINS.

Says Hazlitt: "Among all our poets who have attempted only short pieces, Collins is probably the one who has shown the most of the highest qualities of poetry, and who excites the most intense interest in the bosom of the reader. He soars into the regions of imagination, and occupies the highest peaks of Parnassus." His Ode on the Passions is the most popular.

The early part of his life was somewhat irregular. But Johnson tells us of him, that "his morals were pure, and his opinions pious." He also relates of him, that in the latter part of his mortal career, he withdrew from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to school. When a friend took it in his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen—"I have only one book," said Collins, "but that is the best."

## WILLIAM COWPER.

Of the celebrated author of the Task, I select the following notice from the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge:—

"Cowper is a poet of varied powers: he is by turns playful and pathetic, tender and sarcastic; in some instances, he rises to sublimity; and in picturesque delineation he has no rival but Thomson, and he generally surpasses him in elegance. His other characteristics are simplicity, individuality, transparency of ideas, bold originality, singular purity, and *experimental Christian piety.* All his poems bear marks of his mature authorship, his accurate rather than extensive scholarship, and his unwearied desire to benefit mankind. His Christian life, though oppressed by disease, was pure, useful, and lovely; and even while suffering under the deranged idea that he was an exception to God's general plan of grace,—a deranged idea which hung like a cloud over his soul during the last years of his life,—it is delightful to perceive that it had no tendency to lead him aside from the path of rectitude, or to relax in the least his efforts to maintain the life of religion in his soul. His last accents were those of most

perfect and touching acquiescence in the will of God, with whom, we doubt not, his harassed spirit is now at rest. What a moment was that which dispelled forever its gloom!"

## JAMES BEATTIE

Has been numbered among the most distinguished poets, as the author of "The Minstrel." His fame, however, rests not solely on his poetical compositions. He was born in 1735, received his degree of Master of Arts in 1753, and in 1760 was appointed a professor of philosophy in the college where he was educated. In 1770, he received the degree of LL. D. from King's College, Aberdeen; and from 1773, he received a pension from the king. Among his prose works, are found the justly celebrated "Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth," an "Essay on Memory and Imagination," a "Treatise on the Evidences of Christianity," and "Elements of Moral Science."

The following tribute is from Jones's Christian Biography:—"In every situation of life Dr. Beattie acquitted himself with credit. He performed his duties to his fellow-creatures and his God with integrity, zeal, and delight. In his early years he was light and frivolous;

but, as he became more acquainted with the nature of his own heart, his conduct was consistent, and uniformly correct. For the cause of truth, Christianity, and science, he was a zealous and able advocate. Many of his pupils have acknowledged their obligations to him; and the present and succeeding generations will cheerfully unite in such acknowledgments. His style was chaste; his sentences uniformly simple; his poetry was very beautiful; and it is to be regretted that so small a part of his time was spent in the cultivation of the muses."

It may be worth while to add his opinion of one of the books composing that volume, which many a one, in his ignorance, thinks not worth his perusal:—"Of the divine nature, the Psalms of David contain the most magnificent descriptions that the soul of man can comprehend. The one hundred and fourth Psalm in particular, displays the power and goodness of Providence, in creating and preserving the world, and the various tribes of animals in it, with such majestic brevity and beauty, as it is in vain to look for in any human composition."

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

"WAS born in 1770, in Cumberland, England. He graduated from St. John's College, Cambridge, about the year 1787, and soon after became intimate with Coleridge, with whom he passed much time in literary and other pursuits. He is the celebrated founder of what is called the Lake school of poetry, *and is also entitled to the far more honourable appellation of Christian poet.*" So says the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge; and it is marvellous indeed, that any biographical writer should ever have conceived that the fame of a man arising from the possession of any other excellence, could eclipse that arising from his *religious* character. Yet so it is that we are often left to infer the religious character of good men, by some mere incidental remark of their biographers.

## WALTER SCOTT.

THE following remarks on the productions of this great man, cannot but be read with interest. Sir Walter was neither an infidel nor a sceptic; would that he had adorned Christianity more by his writings!

"Scott's literary character rests almost exclusively upon his peculiar power of combining and embellishing past events, and his skill in delineating natural character. Memory, imagination, and the love of antiquity, were his intellectual traits, and these have been developed in every variety of form with a wonderful opulence. His diction is rich, but far from pure or elegant. His writings abound with benevolence, with humour, and lively illustration; yet they rarely open glimpses of Christian excellence, or touch upon the higher destinies reserved for man as seen in the light of divine revelation. An author of seventy volumes of popular literature, and a professor, no doubt sincerely, of Christian faith, a member of the Church of England, might surely have made some higher offering to religion than even the purity of his example, and the general moral tendency of his writings.

"His fictitious works are entirely free, it is true, from the moral blemishes of Byron and Moore, or even of Shakspeare and Pope—they teach neither licentiousness, pride, envy, nor misanthropy; they abound in sound sense, and practical wisdom for everyday life—but we fear they must be pronounced sadly deficient in the wisdom for eternity. Yet the author knew and felt there was a higher wisdom, as

is manifest from his Lay Sermons on the atonement, &c., and his valuable letters on demonology and witchcraft. And in his account of his own life, there occurs a passage which is worthy of record here, as much for the sake of *his* readers as our own. 'It was my first resolution,' he observes, 'to keep as far as was in my power abreast of society; continuing to maintain my place in general company, without yielding to the very natural temptation of narrowing myself to what is called literary society. By doing so, I imagined I should escape the besetting sin of listening to language which, from one motive or another, ascribes a very undue degree of consequence to literary pursuits, as if they were indeed the business rather than the amusement of life!' Till literature becomes impregnated with a more Christian spirit, this is the true estimate of its value; and this, doubtless, accounts for Sir Walter's habit of depreciating conscientiously the merit of his own large contributions to it. A higher praise awaits that glorious genius yet to appear, who, with equal power to win the public attention, shall spread abroad a literature, like the beautiful parables of our Lord, adapted not merely to please, but to reform, bless, and save mankind."

The above judicious remarks, quoted from the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge, place Scott where I would leave him. He was a believer and a member of the Christian Church; and how many others, like him, withhold from the service of their Creator that which he has lent them. Wealth, and time, and health, and strength, as well as *talents*, are the gifts of Him in whom we live and move and have our being; and he who withholds from His service any of these, in the impressive language of Scripture, *robs God.*

## EDMUND SMITH

Was a man of great acquirements. I find the following statement concerning him. I wish more could have been said in his praise:—"He had mingled with the gay world, without exemption from its vices or its follies, but had never neglected the cultivation of his mind; his belief of revelation was unshaken; his learning preserved his principles; he grew first regular, and then pious."

WILLIAM KING

Also mingled too largely with the gay world for his best interests. It is said of him, however, that "though his life had not been without irregularity, his principles were pure and orthodox, and his death was pious."

CHARLES MONTAGUE,

Earl of Halifax, at one time intended to take orders in the Church of England; and though he changed his purposes, I am not aware that he ever changed his principles. His political elevation enabled him to become the patron of Addison, Steele, Pope, and Swift.

JOHN HUGHES

Was associated with the first literary writers of his day; and contributed both to the "Tatler," "Spectator," and "Guardian." His last literary performance was a tragedy. "On February 17, 1820, the play was represented, and the author died. He lived to hear that it was well received; but paid no regard to the intelligence, being then wholly employed in the meditations of a departing Christian."

## SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE

Was a very respectable poet; but produced several works in the other departments of learning. The last work he published is "Natural Theology, or Moral Duties considered apart from Positive; with some Observations on the Desirableness and the Necessity of a Supernatural Revelation." He left behind him "The Accomplished Preacher, or an Essay upon Divine Eloquence," which was printed after his death by Mr. White, of Nayland, in Essex, the minister who attended his death-bed, and testified the fervent piety of his last hours. His respect for the Bible as a mere literary work is expressed in the following words:—"For sense, and for noble and sublime thoughts, the poetical parts of Scripture have an infinite advantage above all others put together."

## ELIJAH FENTON.

Of his speculative opinions I know nothing. Johnson says: "Of his morals and his conversation the account is uniform; he was never named but with praise and fondness, as a man in the highest degree amiable and ex-

cellent." Pope speaks of his "amiable, *Christian*, and philosophical character."

## NICHOLAS BOILEAU

Was born at Paris, in 1636; and at thirty years of age, the strength and harmony of his verse, the delicacy of his satire, and the energy of his style, had raised him above his poetical predecessors, and had made him the favourite of France and of Europe. Subsequently a pension was settled on him by the king. A biographer says:—"After enjoying the favours of his sovereign, and all the honours which the French Academy, and the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres could bestow, Boileau retired from public life, dissatisfied with the insincerity of the world, and the profligacy of manners which he had satirized with spirit and truth, and he spent his time in literary privacy, in the society of a few select and valuable friends. He died, an example of great resignation and piety, March 2, 1711, in his seventy-fifth year."

The Bible was *his* Book. Says he: "Every word and syllable of the Bible ought to be adored: it not only cannot be too much admired, but it cannot be enough admired."

## FENELON,

THE celebrated author of "*Telemachus*," was Archbishop and Duke of Cambray. His name is as immortal as the French language; and is embalmed with his work, in almost all the languages of Europe. He was eminently pious.

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